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A POPULAR ILLUSTRATED REPORT
OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN
BIBLE SOCIETY 1908-1909



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THE WORD AMONG THE NATIONS



THE WORD AMONG THE NATIONS.





A MACEDONIAN SHEPHERD.

THE WORD AMONG THE NATIONS

A POPULAR
ILLUSTRATED
REPORT
OF THE BRITISH
AND FOREIGN
BIBLE SOCIETY
FOR THE YEAR
MCMVIII-IX

THE BIBLE HOUSE
QUEEN VICTORIA STREET LONDON

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2370

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1908/09

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

Except where otherwise stated the incidents and statistics in the following pages belong to last year's record. It should be noted that this period is reckoned to end on December 31st, 1908, as regards the Bible Society's foreign work; and as regards its home work, on March 31st, 1909.

T. H. DARLOW,
Literary Superintendent.

THE BIBLE HOUSE,
August, 1909.

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“When the Lord gave the law from Sinai He wrought great marvels with His voice. The Voice sounded from the South; and as the people hastened to the South, lo! it sounded from the North. They turned to the North, and it came from the East. They turned to the East, and it came from the West. They turned thither, and it came from heaven. They lifted up their eyes to heaven, and it came from the depths of the earth. And they said one to another, Where shall wisdom be found?”

“And the Voice went forth throughout the world, and was divided into seventy voices, according to the seventy tongues of men, and each nation heard the Voice in its own tongue. . . . And each one in Israel heard it according to his capacity; old men, and youths, and boys, and sucklings, and women; the Voice was to each one as each one had the power to receive it.”

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PROEM.

No human endowment is more wonderful and mysterious than the power of speech. It is a distinctive faculty in man which sets him apart from all other living creatures. The dumb beasts, as we significantly call them, can utter characteristic sounds ; but these sounds fall far short of articulate words, and the two are separated by a gulf which no animal has ever crossed. Language, in its proper sense, is something unattained and unattainable by the mute creation. For it really begins when a definite sound is recognized by mutual understanding as the symbol of some particular idea, and so can be used as a means of communicating that idea. Language, says W. von Humboldt, is the outcome of "the eternal striving of the human spirit to make the articulated sound equal to the expression of the thought." For man is a social being, and one prime necessity of his existence is fellowship with his kind. Out of this imperious instinct which urges us to communicate with one another, primitive speech was born.

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Curious and fantastic theories have been held regarding the primeval language of mankind. One long-cherished notion was expressed by St. Jerome when he wrote, in an epistle to Damasus: "the whole of antiquity affirms that Hebrew, in which the Old Testament is written, was the beginning of all human speech." Origen, in his eleventh homily on the Book of Numbers, states his belief that the Hebrew tongue, originally given through Adam, survived in that part of the world which was the chosen portion of God. By similar logic, the Buddhist priests in Ceylon claimed that Pâli, the language of the *Tripitaka* which is their sacred canon, was the mother of all other tongues. At Antwerp, in the year 1580, Goropius published a book to prove that Dutch was spoken in Paradise; while less than a century ago, J. B. Erro, in his work *El Mundo primitivo* which appeared in 1814, claimed that Adam and Eve talked Basque. The most learned modern philologists, however, are not disposed to dogmatize about the genesis of this mysterious faculty of speech. The whole process is hidden in the darkness of an impenetrable past. One authority considers that the earliest form of language consisted of unconnected monosyllables which were used as names for visible objects. But to the enquiry, "how did such primitive names come to exist?" he frankly admits that he has no answer: "It must be confessed that upon this subject nothing very satisfactory has yet been said, or is likely soon to be said. The question is exceedingly far-reaching and its solution is necessarily devoid of adequate data. . . . So far, the theories advanced have been mere guess-work, although the guesses possess various degrees of plausibility."*

* *Introduction to the Natural History of Language*, by T. G. Tucker, 1908.

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Two points, however, emerge, which have become accepted among the ablest scholars. It is agreed that all existing forms of language, in spite of their bewildering diversity, are one in essential characteristics, just as humanity is one in its separateness from the lower animals. When we are able to describe that which unites men, we may perchance understand the formation of speech which is the symbol of their union. Further, it is agreed that language, which serves as the means whereby men communicate, is also incidentally an immense help to them in every attempt to think. Max Müller goes so far as to affirm, "without speech no reason, without reason no speech." And if we hesitate at that sweeping dictum, we cannot but feel how strangely our words can crystallize and embody our thoughts, giving to airy nothing a local habitation and a name. Man's first step towards real knowledge of any object is generally to give it a name. As soon as we name it, we begin to make it knowable, for we have brought an individual object into a general class. Words are far more than mere labels. They have subtle power over the processes of the mind. They colour our emotions and shape our ideas. Hegel recognized this when he wrote, "it is in words that we think."

* * *

If we turn from questions of philosophy to questions of divinity, we are confronted by a corresponding limitation. Here, too, we are only able to think by the help of words. Countless generations of men have pondered over the supreme problem—how to find language which can express the unutterable nature and thought of God. The rabbis of Jerusalem and the mystics of Alexandria discoursed, not always very consistently,

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of a Divine Word, whereby the Most High makes Himself known in action and teaching. The later Stoics preached in another sense their doctrine of the *Spermatikos Logos* (the Generative Reason) and affirmed that one Divine Word was the essence alike of gods and men. And that very term *Logos* stood in Greek alike for reason and for speech in which reason takes rational and coherent form. It was the term borrowed by the first Christians when they set forth the Eternal Gospel: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.*

Such language expresses a mysterious truth which the wisest philosophers have never exhausted. Yet simple work-a-day men and women, who know nothing about philosophy, can receive and rejoice in the glorious assurance that God Himself has broken silence, and uttered the incommunicable secret, and shown us how we may think about the mystery of His own Being: *in these last days He hath spoken unto us in His Son.* The supreme and final Word of God is the Divine Person of Jesus Christ, transcending the world yet immanent in it, now incarnate for us men and for our salvation. Here is the distinctive doctrine of Christianity. The revelation in our Lord's Person sums up everything that went before it in the ancient Scripture. "All the words of God which were spoken in divers parts and in divers manners, were so many fragments of the truth which formed a perfect whole in Christ."

In the story of the healing of Bartimæus, the Arabic version of Tatian's Diatessaron has preserved a gloss which is lacking in Greek MSS. In answer to the question "What wilt thou that I should do unto Thee?"

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we read that the blind man said unto Him, "My Lord and Teacher, that Thou shouldest open my eyes, and *that I may see Thee.*" Here is the enduring office and function of Holy Scripture—to open our eyes and bring us face to face with Christ Himself. It is most true that the Word is "new born every day over again in the hearts of the saints." He is alive for evermore in the experience of His Church. In this sense it has been beautifully said that "the Gospels are not four, but 'ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,' and the last word of every one of them is 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'"*

Yet it remains also true that Christianity is a historic faith. Apart from what we know about our Lord from the Scripture, He would dissolve into a phantom or evaporate into a vague sentiment. By virtue of the New Testament His Real Presence lives and moves among us still. The whole content of God's revelation is written in letters whereof He is Alpha and Omega; and in each chapter of our Christian experience He still makes Himself the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. This is why Ignatius bids us "fly to the Gospels as to the Flesh"—the very outward manifestation—"of Christ"; and on the other hand writes in the same epistle, "for me "the documents are Jesus Christ; my unassailable "documents are His cross and His death and His "resurrection, and the faith that is through Him; in "which I hope through your prayers to be saved."†

* *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*,
by T. R. Glover, p. 140.

† Ignatius, *Ad Philad.* 5 and 8.

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During the last century of Christian progress at home and abroad, there has grown up, in the economy of God's Providence, one great institution whose privilege it is to act as the Steward of modern Christendom in translating and distributing the Scriptures. The British and Foreign Bible Society exists for one sole and supreme object. It leaves all questions of interpretation and criticism and comment to be dealt with by recognized and appointed teachers, while it labours with a single eye to place the Book which all men need in the hands of each man who is willing to receive it. The chapters which follow will present a series of pictures drawn from the records of the Bible Society's multifarious service at home and abroad during the past year.

THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES.

*“ Oh, but the heavenly grammar did I hold
Of that high speech which angels’ tongues turn gold!*

.

*Or if that language yet with us abode
Which Adam in the garden talked with God!
But our untempered speech descends—poor heirs!
Grimy and rough-cast still from Babel’s bricklayers.”*

FRANCIS THOMPSON.

We all know what it means to belong to a nation. Yet when we try to define precisely what constitutes a nation and separates it from other peoples and tribes, we soon discover that we have embarked on no very simple task. We may perhaps agree that a nation consists of men who share the same blood and the same soil, the same faith and the same speech. They have a sense of common descent. They not only inhabit one country, but they come of one stock. In earlier times they traced their lineage back to some primitive ancestor—Father Æneas or Father Abraham. They inherit common memories and traditions and institutions. They live under the same law. They worship at the same altars. They have been welded together in conflict against common foes. And, finally, they use the same language: the great sacrament of nationality is a common mother-tongue.

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Now it is plain that not every nation fulfils all these conditions. The Swiss are a nation, though four different languages are current in their cantons. The Poles are a nation, though the kingdom of Poland has been blotted out from the map of Europe. The Bible shows us how from a tribe the Jews became a nation, and conquered a country for themselves and obtained national laws and government. And the Jews are a nation still, though for more than eighteen centuries they have been wandering homeless in the world. Bishop Creighton has declared that nations with their diversities of temperament and institutions and customs form part of that Divine order which is revealed in the facts of human history.

It is true indeed that the old national order is changing before our eyes. Populations shift and migrate, and whole peoples die out. Not a few races seem to wither by mere contact with Europeans. In Canada and the United States the red man lingers only in vanishing remnants. The Carib has practically disappeared from the West Indian islands. In the Pacific the Kanaka and the Papuan are dwindling. The last of the Tasmanians expired within living memory. The Australian aborigines are in rapid decay. We hear present-day prophets predicting that the earth will soon be divided among a few dominant peoples. Others, again, believe that nations themselves are growing cosmopolitan and losing their old distinctiveness. It is argued that capital has become international and that trades-unionism is fast following the example. "On the horizon of modern thought we are in sight of the fact that in the progress of the world the days of 'nationalities' in the old sense are numbered." *

* Benjamin Kidd: "*Principles of Western Civilization*," p. 385.

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Yet such predictions can never be more than guess-work. We are aware, on the other hand, in quite recent years of a most significant and wide-spread revival of nationality. Race-consciousness grows more intense, while race-hatreds certainly do not grow less bitter. Among Magyars and Czechs and Poles and Irish and Welsh, national spirit reasserts itself by a passionate pride in national speech. Whatever the future may have in store, we and our children are living in a polyglot world.

Few English people realize the extraordinary diversities of language which divide the different kindreds and tribes of mankind. Take Chinese, for example, which is spoken by nearly a quarter of the human race. Chinese consists mainly, if not entirely, of words of one syllable: it has no inflexions, no declensions, no conjugations, and little or no grammar. There are Bantu languages, spoken by savages in Africa, which possess complicated inflexions and a most elaborate system of sustained grammatical concord which pervades each sentence. In North America the Indian languages build up a complex idea by combining many syllables into a single word: thus in Cherokee, "*wi-ni-taw-ti-ge-gi-na-li-skaw-lung-ta-naw-ne-le-ti-se-sti*" is equivalent to "they will by this time have come to the end of their declarations of favour to you and me." The Polynesians possess only ten consonants—f, k, l, m, n, ng, p, s, t, v. The speech of the Hottentots is full of clicks and clucking sounds. An early French missionary to Annam wrote: "When I arrived and heard the natives speak, particularly the women, I thought I heard the twittering of birds, and I gave up all hope of ever learning it."

In Annam similar words are distinguished by modulations. For instance, "*ba* pronounced with the grave accent means a lady; pronounced with the sharp accent, it means the

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favourite of a prince ; pronounced with the semi-grave accent, it means what has been thrown away ; pronounced with the grave circumflex, it means what is left of a fruit after it has been squeezed out ; pronounced with no accent, it means three ; pronounced with the ascending or interrogative accent, it means a box on the ear. Thus :—*Ba, bà, bâ, bá*, is said to mean, if properly pronounced, ‘Three ladies gave a box on the ear to the favourite of the prince.’ ”*

In Melanesia and the New Hebrides each little island speaks a different dialect, unintelligible to its neighbours, who have been its enemies for uncounted generations : there are cases where two or three such dialects occur on one small island. Strabo described the Caucasus as “the mountain of tongues,” and many of its upland valleys still form a kind of linguistic museum : for by its situation this range caused a natural eddy in the migrations between Asia and Europe, so that remnants of many tongues have been there stranded and preserved. When the Tsar of Russia kept his coronation festival at Moscow, he received in audience representatives of all the hundred and twenty races and tribes included under his sway, each wearing a distinctive costume and using a separate speech. Among our fellow-subjects in the Indian Empire more than a hundred and fifty different languages are spoken—not mere dialects, but languages as different from each other, at least, as French is from Spanish.

Surely of all buildings ever erected on earth the Tower of Babel has cast the longest and the blackest shadow.

* * *

The Task of the Translator.

The complete Bible in a heathen tongue ! Do we realise what a world of consecrated toil this represents ?

* *Max Müller, Lectures on the Science of Language. Second Series, p. 31.*

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Behind the finished Book lie its earlier sections, the New Testament or the Psalter or one or two Gospels ; behind these, again, lie the first attempts at the Lord's Prayer and a few scattered texts, and behind all lie the reduction of the language to writing and the preparation of grammar and dictionary. The Bible learns to utter God's thoughts in a new tongue as a child learns to talk. First in broken words, which gradually gain shape and distinctness ; then in sentences, which, though disjointed at first, grow more and more closely connected till ultimately the child's words become a more or less complete vehicle of his thoughts. Such is the life-history of the first complete Bible in a heathen tongue, prepared in New England by the earliest Protestant missionary, John Eliot, one of the Pilgrim Fathers. He began to study the language of the Massachusetts Indians, about 1643, with the help of an Indian who had been captured in war. Soon the infant Massachusetts Bible began to learn its new lesson, and growing day by day, it stood forth before the world in 1663 in the dignity of complete manhood. At the end of his Indian Grammar, Eliot lifts the veil from its history and tells us a little of what it cost. He writes :

“I have now finished what I shall do at present : And in a word or two to satisfie the prudent Enquirer how I found out these new wayes of Grammar, which no other Learned Language (so far as I know) useth ; I thus inform him : God first put into my heart a compassion over their poor Souls, and a desire to teach them to know Christ, and to bring them into his Kingdome. Then presently I found out (by Gods wise providence) a pregnant witted young man, who had been a Servant in an English house, who pretty well understood our Language, better than he could speak it, and well understood his own Language,

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and hath a clear pronunciation : Him I made my interpreter. By his help I translated the Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and many Texts of Scripture : also I compiled both Exhortations and Prayers by his help. I diligently marked the difference of their Grammar from ours : When I found the way of them, I would pursue a Word, a Noun, a Verb, through all variations I could think of. And thus I came at it. We must not sit still, and look for Miracles : Up, and be doing, and the Lord will be with thee. *Prayer and Pains, through Faith in Jesus Christ, will do any thing."*

John Eliot's experience has been reproduced in the lives of many subsequent translators, whose prayers and pains, joined with their faith, have moved away mountains of difficulty and opened out a way for the voice of God to hearts hitherto unconscious of His tones. This noble self-sacrifice and heroic drudgery of the translators, coupled with the magnificent devotion of those who have carried the Book in their hands and the generosity of those who have provided the funds, make the work of the Bible Society incomparably sacred. Such gifts are indeed sanctified by the altar.

Poverty-stricken Languages.

The Mosquito Indians in Nicaragua had originally no word for sin. The idea had to be expressed by their word *saura*, which means bad in anything, *e.g.*, bad to eat. Another word sometimes used for sin is *wattaui*, which means "out of the way"—a significant expression. The Indian race is not blest with a forgiving spirit ; nevertheless their phrase representing the verb "to forgive" is a speaking one indeed : in literal English it means, "To take a man's fault out of your heart." God's mercy has taken this form in Mosquito-Indian, "The law of God's white heart." Doubtless, Christianity may be credited with the birth of these combinations.

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The language being notably poor, and the ideas of the people correspondingly circumscribed, some ideas of the Gospel could not be given to them except in a cast of their own words specially framed for the purpose.

Dr. George Smith, of the Australasian Methodist Mission, who reduced the language of New Britain to written form and translated a Gospel into it, declares that among those islanders the active-transitive meaning of the verb "forgive" is utterly unknown. "Even in a land like Fiji, now a Christian country, we have not yet been able to translate the sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer in any other way than: 'Be not angry with us on account of our sins, as we are not angry,' etc."

Regarding the Ibo language, which is current among at least 3,000,000 tribesmen in Southern Nigeria, Archdeacon Dennis writes:—

"Our search after suitable words gives us glimpses now and then of the state of things existing from time immemorial in this part of the pagan world. It is at least suggestive that the same word has to do duty for 'right' and 'might,' that there is no way of distinguishing between 'to punish' and 'to make suffer,' that 'truth' has as its nearest equivalent 'good word,' that 'servant' and 'slave' are synonymous, that 'friendship' and 'fornication' are scarcely distinguishable, that 'hope' can only be expressed by a paraphrase, and that 'conscience' has to be transliterated. Naturally, we find the language sadly deficient in all that relates to the unseen and spiritual, while on the other hand it is redundant in what concerns the body and every-day life. The word 'soul' has no equivalent, and the equivalent for 'spirit' is so monopolized by superstition that necessity alone has induced us, after much hesitation, to adopt it. The same is true to a less extent of the word for 'holy.'"

The Rev. H. C. Withey, of the American Methodist Episcopal Mission is just completing—at the Bible

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Society's charges—the first version of the New Testament ever made in Ki-Mbundu. This is one of the strongest Bantu languages of South-West Africa, where it is spoken by a people in the central region of the Portuguese Colony of Angola. Mr. Withey has spent twenty years among these Ki-Mbundu, and he thus describes their speech :—

“They have a full vocabulary for vices, but a limited one for virtues. The equivalent for ‘sacrifice’ was very difficult to find, not because they had not the idea, but because it was so seldom mentioned in ordinary conversation. The word for ‘Saviour’ we coined, according to the analogy of other names derived from verbs, and proved afterward not only that we were warranted in so doing, but also that this term was in actual use among the natives. The missionaries at first could find no noun for ‘love.’ They had the verb, however, and they thought by omitting the prefix of the verb ‘to love’ (*ku-zola*), and thus dropping the sign of the infinitive, they would have the noun *zola* left. As it happens no such word exists in Ki-Mbundu ; but the nearest approach to it in sound is a word which means “a hook.” One day a missionary was speaking very earnestly, and using this word *zola*, while the natives sat completely mystified. Finally, one said to the others, ‘I know what he means : he is talking about those big iron fish-hooks.’”

“On one occasion I was stuck fast for the Ki-Mbundu word for ‘plague.’ I named the Portuguese equivalent, ‘*peste*,’ and asked a native for the word in his own language ; but he could not tell me. Three or four days later some men were talking about rats, and said what a *dibebu* they were. I had found the word I wanted !”

In the New Hebrides.

The rendering of the names for the points of the compass has proved curiously difficult in numerous dialects spoken on certain small islands in Oceania.

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For instance, a word meaning 'seawards' may be used for east, or west, or south, according to the side of the island upon which the speakers are living. On the island of Efaté, in the New Hebrides, the word '*suefate*' or '*sueula*,' used on the north side of the island, means 'south wind,' but used on the south side of the island it means 'north wind'—the literal sense of the term being 'coming down from Efaté, or from inland.' So at Havannah Harbour, the word '*tokalau*,' which is literally 'abide on the sea,' may mean a wind blowing from any part of the sea visible from the Harbour—that is, any wind from the east to the north or west.

On the other hand, from the island of Ambrym we hear* of a beautiful word, the native word for love. Literally translated, it means 'the heart keeps calling, calling for me'; and 'love of God' in the native Ambrym language is 'the heart-callings of God.' Another most picturesque thought is locked up in their word for 'good-bye'; it means literally 'fire in the sky again to you,' that is to say, 'another dawn,' and is equivalent to our old English word 'good-morrow.'

In Uganda.

At the Society's annual meeting in Queen's Hall last May, an impressive address was delivered by the Rev. H. E. Maddox, of the C.M.S. Mission in Unyoro, part of the Uganda Protectorate. Our Society has published Mr. Maddox's translation of the New Testament into Nyoro, and he is returning to Africa to complete the Bible in that language. In his speech he gave some vivid examples of the "traps" which beset translators engaged in rendering the Scriptures into an African tongue.

* *Saints and Savages*, p. 197

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“When St. Peter was asked, ‘Doth not your Master pay tribute?’ he answered ‘Yes’; but if in the language of Unyoro we were to translate the word ‘Yes’ by the equivalent for ‘Yes,’ the meaning conveyed to a native would be ‘Yes, He does not,’ because the word affirms whatever has gone before, including the negative.

“Many people think that the same word in Greek should always be represented by the same word in the native language. Let us try. Take the word ‘carry.’ You may carry a box, or you may carry a sick man; but if you used for the sick man the same word that you have used for the box, you would suggest that you were trying to balance him on the top of your head.

“Many passages are extremely difficult to translate. ‘The fir-tree is a dwelling for the stork’—but there are no fir-trees in Uganda. Shall we then choose a tree which is like a fir-tree? The stork will not live in it. We must surely choose a tree where the stork does live, whether it is like a fir-tree or not.”

Swahili.

One of the great languages of the world is Swahili, which serves as a *lingua franca* throughout the main part of East Africa. The principal translator of the Swahili Bible was Dr. Steere, who went out in 1863 as a member of the U.M.C.A., and was consecrated Bishop of Central Africa in 1874. A lady missionary, who worked for many years under the Universities’ Mission, recently described how, by her knowledge of idiomatic Swahili, she was able to assist Bishop Steere in his translation. For example, in Rev. xix. 8, the wife of the Lamb is said to be ‘arrayed in fine linen clean and white,’ and ‘linen’ the Bishop had rendered by the word *bafta*. Now *bafta*, says Miss Allen, “is a word commonly used in the bazaars for the very poorest,



Photo kindly lent by the Rev. R. H. Unkley.

FOUR KINGS IN THE UGANDA PROTECTORATE, WITH THEIR PRIME MINISTERS BEHIND.

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cheapest, glazed calico that is made—such as no self-respecting draper in England would deign to have in his shop. So I exclaimed, ‘Not *bafta*! I can’t have the Lamb’s wife clothed in *bafta*.’” Finally, she persuaded the Bishop to adopt instead *kitani*, the Arabic word for linen. The Swahili New Testament was published in 1883, and the Bible in 1891. In this language our Society has issued over 100,000 copies of the Scriptures.

The Ideal Translator.

Illustrations such as these help us to appreciate the story told of Olivetan, Calvin’s cousin, who made the earliest French version of the Bible which was translated direct from the original Hebrew and Greek. It is said that the name Olivetan means literally “burner of oil,” and that it was bestowed on him as a *soubriquet*, by way of homage to the immense labour which he devoted to his version, trimming his lamp through so many midnight vigils. A true translator will spare neither oil, nor pains, nor patience, in order that the Scriptures may speak as clearly and simply and sweetly as possible God’s message to each man in his own mother-tongue. Where can we seek a better ideal of a translator than in the picture which Interpreter showed to Christian:—“It had eyes lifted up to heaven; the best of books in its hand; the law of truth was written upon its lips; the world was behind its back; it stood as if it pleaded with men; and a crown of glory did hang over its head.”

Translators of the Scriptures come from all races, from all ranks in life, and from all sections of the Christian Church. In heathen and Moslem lands most of them are missionary scholars, but we find not a few exceptions. The version of the Bible in Tagalog, the most widely spoken language in the Philippines, was

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begun in Spain by a Filipino who had been carried over there and was encouraged in his undertaking by our Society's Agent at Madrid. The work was afterwards carried on by the Society's Agent at Manila, who completed it in Australia with the aid of another Filipino. St. Mark's Gospel was translated into Masai by a Government official in British East Africa. The version of the Burmese New Testament which is now passing through the press has been the work of a Christian Burman who is a translator in the service of the Burma Government. The Dinka version of St. Luke's Gospel used by the C.M.S. Mission in the Sudan was revised by an ex-Agent of our Society ; he based his study of Dinka on the linguistic researches of certain Jesuit missionaries, made available by an Austrian philologist who prepared the version. The history of many versions in Polynesia shows that these were begun by native Christians who had left their own homes and gone forth to other islands as pioneer missionaries of the Gospel.

Six New Versions.

During the past year pioneer versions in six fresh languages have been added to the Bible Society's ever-lengthening list. *Kanauri* and *Rabha* belong to Asia ; *Ora* and *Ndau* to Africa ; and *Mailu* and *Lau* to Oceania. Each of these languages was reduced to written form in order that it might become the vehicle of the Gospel.

In publishing these new versions the Society serves various sections of the Christian Church. *Kanauri* will be used by Moravian missionaries, and *Rabha* by American Baptists ; *Ora* will help to nurture a Mission which may be called a grandchild of the C.M.S., for it is

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the offspring of the Niger Delta Pastorate of the Anglican Church. Ndaou will serve both the American Congregationalists of the A.B.C.F.M. and the South Africa General Mission. In the Southern Seas Mailu is used by the L.M.S., and Lau by the Melanesian Mission.

Kanauri.

This version is for a tribe on the southern slopes of the Himalayas, where Kanauri is the language of the Kanāwar country to the north and north-east of Simla, and it is spoken by about 20,000 people. Although some of the men are also able to speak Hindi, Kanauri is the only language understood by the women and children. It is allied to, but distinct from, Tibetan. Kanauri possesses a highly developed dual, a middle but no passive voice, a double imperative, and certain vowels and consonants peculiar to itself. Our Society has published St. Mark's Gospel in this tongue. The version is the work of the Rev. J. T. and Mrs. Bruske, of the Moravian Mission at Chini, about fourteen days' march from Simla. The Anglican congregation at Simla presented £50 to the Bible Society as a Centenary offering, expressing the wish that it might be used to publish a Gospel in one of the Simla hill-dialects. The gift has helped to pay for printing the Kanauri St. Mark.

Rabha.

Along the north bank of the Brahmaputra river, in Northern Assam, is the home of the Rabhas. At one time they were a fighting clan of the Bodo race, and furnished recruits for our regiments in Assam. To-day they consist of peaceful farmers, whose religion is demon-worship, and whose chief vice is drunkenness. The Gospel of St. Mark in Rabha, which has just

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left the press, is intended for the Rangdania sub-division of this clan, which is said to include about 18,000 people. The translator, the Rev. A. C. Bowers, belongs to the American Baptist Missionary Union, and is at present the only missionary at work among the Rangdania. According to his own estimate, perhaps 1,000 of these people are able to read; but education is rapidly spreading. The Rabha children in the schools are being educated through the medium of Bengali, and are familiar with the Bengali characters, in which this edition of St. Mark has been printed.

Ora.

This is the mother-tongue of 15,000 tribesmen living in Southern Nigeria. Though it is the language of the Benin territory, it is not understood by the people of Benin city, who speak the Addo language instead. Such a fact illustrates the bewildering Babel of dialects to be found throughout West Africa.

For some time the Delta Pastorate of the Anglican Church has been spreading the Gospel in this part of Southern Nigeria, where there is now an organized native Christian community, numbering 500 souls. In August, 1908, Bishop Johnson, brought to the Bible House a manuscript of the Four Gospels in the Ora language. The translation had been made under his supervision by a native evangelist named Isaiah Akinluyi. Years ago this man was captured and carried off from his home in the Ora country to serve as a slave in Yoruba-land. During his exile there he acquired a knowledge of the speech of his task-masters, which enabled him subsequently, after he had regained his freedom, to translate the Gospels from the Yoruba New Testament into his native language. Akinluyi is

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totally unacquainted with English, and, therefore, could not use the English version. Our Society has published St. Matthew and St. Mark in Ora, and the other two Gospels will very shortly follow.

Ndau.

In South Africa the Four Gospels have been translated into Ndau, the language of a tribe inhabiting the Melsetter district on the eastern edge of Rhodesia. The translators are Mr. Hatch, of the South Africa General Mission, and Dr. Wilder, of the A.B.C.F.M., who have worked together in preparing these Gospels, which are now being printed by the Bible Society.

Lau.

In the Solomon Islands of the South Pacific, Lau is one language spoken on the island of Mwala, where it forms the mother-tongue of a race of fishermen dwelling round the western and northern coasts. These people live on densely populated little islets, and they may number 6,000. Already there are about 160 Lau Christians, who show great eagerness to possess the New Testament in their own language. St. Matthew's Gospel was translated into Lau by the Rev. W. G. Ivens and the Rev. A. I. Hopkins, and printed four years ago at the Melanesian Press, Norfolk Island. The Bible Society has arranged to take over this Gospel, refunding the cost of its publication, and has also undertaken to bear the expense of printing any further books which may be translated. Mr. Hopkins expects to have St. Luke ready before long.

Mailu.

Along the south-eastern coast of British New Guinea, Mailu is the mother-tongue of the natives of Toulon

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Island, which is also called Mailu or Mailukolo. This island lies about four miles off the coast, opposite the east end of Table Bay, and is being evangelized by the L.M.S. During 1907 our Auxiliary in New South Wales undertook to publish a translation of St. Mark in Mailu, which had been prepared by the Rev. W. J. Savile, a L.M.S. missionary on the island.

Three more complete New Testaments.

Last year saw the New Testament completed in *Bicol*, one of the chief languages of the Philippines, where it will be used by the American missionaries in that archipelago; and also in *Shambala*, which is spoken in Usambara, a hilly plateau overlooking the plains of German East Africa, and is employed by the German Evangelical Mission there.

The New Testament has also been completed in *Dobu*, the language of an island off the east coast of New Guinea, where it will be employed by the Australian Methodist Mission. The Rev. W. E. Bromilow was engaged last year at Sydney in completing the version of the New Testament for our Society to publish. In the early days of Mr. Bromilow's experience, his wife was once sitting in their house at Dobu, when word was brought that the natives were burying a dead woman and her living child along with her. Mrs. Bromilow ran out and rescued a baby boy literally from the breast of his dead mother. She took him home to the Mission House, where he was carefully tended, and grew up into a young man who went to Sydney with Mr. Bromilow to act as his assistant in translating and revising this Dobu New Testament.

The number of complete Bibles on the Society's list remains 105—the figure reported in 1908. The number

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of complete New Testaments has risen to 102. There remain 211 other languages in which only some part of the Testament has as yet been printed, making up the total to FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, in which the Bible Society has promoted the translation, printing, or distribution, of at least some part of Holy Scripture.

Towards Unity.

At the Lambeth Conference last year, the assembled Bishops made this indisputable pronouncement: 'The waste of force in the mission field calls aloud for unity.' It is the privilege of our Society to draw Christians of different communions into united service so that they may secure a common version of the Charter of their faith. During the last twelve months this principle of union has found fresh opportunities for practice.

The Society has devoted money and pains without stint to produce versions acceptable to Jews. No form of speech gives rise to more perplexing problems than the spoken language of the Jews in Central Europe, commonly known as Yiddish, which is current in various dialects. Our Society has translated the whole Bible into Yiddish, and has printed the New Testament and part of the Old. With the consent of the Rev. Marcus S. Bergmann it has now been decided to produce a unified standard Yiddish Bible, based on his own version, and embodying whatever is best in other versions. We are deeply indebted to him for uniting with other scholars in this work, which will be produced and published by our Society.

A similarly unified version is on foot in West Africa, where the Scriptures had already been printed in three dialects for the Ibo tribes. The New Testament in

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‘Union Ibo,’ prepared by Archdeacon Dennis of the C.M.S. at the expense of our Society, has just been printed ; and he hopes to complete the Ibo Bible on the same lines.

In the Transvaal and Rhodesia, efforts are being made to secure a uniform system of orthography among the Missions working there. In South Africa the Society has also sought to encourage a movement towards the fusion of the two great Kafir versions. In China, the translators of the ‘Union’ versions in Wênli and Mandarin are making steady progress with the Old Testament.

For European immigrants into Canada, the Society has just increased its numerous diglot editions by publishing St. Matthew in Yiddish and English, and the New Testament in Ruthenian and English : it has also printed the Lithuanian Bible specially transliterated into roman characters.

The Hebrew Bible.

The preparation of the Society’s new edition of the Hebrew Bible goes forward steadily under the patient and laborious editorship of Dr. C. D. Ginsburg, the learned Orientalist, who is receiving assistance from Dr. Strack of Berlin, Dr. Eberard Nestle of Maulbronn, and Dr. W. Aldis Wright of Cambridge. The Pentateuch has been issued and received with a chorus of praise. Experience proves, however, that the type used for the Massoretic Apparatus is too small, and larger type will be substituted in the completed Bible. Isaiah will be the first book to appear in this new form.

Newly Revised Bibles.

Last year saw the publication of the Revised Hungarian Bible, a work which has occupied many years,



Photo kindly lent by the Canadian Northern Railway.

HARVESTING ON THE CANADIAN PRAIRIE.

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and employed the best scholarship of the country. It is, perhaps, too soon yet to state with absolute certainty the reception which this Bible will meet with from the Hungarian people ; but everything points to a complete success, and from all sides—from the Churches, from the press, and from private persons—we have a uniform recognition of the value of the new book, and of its superiority to the version which it has replaced. In less than six months after its appearance, the Society was obliged to take steps for the publication of a second edition.

The final revision of the Bengali Bible—originally translated by William Carey—was completed last year by that eminent Bengali scholar, the Rev. Dr. G. H. Rouse, of the Baptist Mission, the news of whose death in the spring of 1909 reached Calcutta on the very day on which this revised Bible was ready for issue.

The revised Cree Bible, the crown of Archdeacon Mackay's life-long labour, has now been published for the Cree Indians in Canada. The revised Chuana Bible, based upon the first version prepared for the Bechuana by Robert Moffat and his colleague, William Ashton, has also passed through the press under the care of the Rev. A. J. Wookey, of the L.M.S. Bechuanaland Mission, who has spent on it many years of toil.

The Society's shilling English School Bible, and the new Welsh Reference Bible, mentioned in last year's Report, have both met with a warm welcome.

Revisions of the Bulgarian Bible, and the Ganda Bible are now being taken in hand by expert scholars in each country.

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For the Chuvash.

The Society has just undertaken to publish the New Testament and Psalter in Chuvash. The agricultural tribe called by this name numbers over half-a-million people, and dwells in the valley of the Volga, for the most part in the provinces of Kazan and Simbirsk. They are considered to be of Mongolian origin, and to have been greatly modified by the intermixture with them of a Tatar element. Their language belongs to the Turki stock, but is written only in Russian characters. The Russian Orthodox Church converted them as a body to Christianity, though it is said that some relics of their ancient heathen practices still survive.

On the bank of the Volga stands Simbirsk, a town of 44,000 inhabitants, from which education has gone forth to the Chuvash people. Here is the seminary for the training of teachers for the Chuvash schools, an institution initiated, and still managed, by Inspector J. Jacobleff, himself a Chuvash. The schools are bi-lingual, instruction being given in Russian as well as in Chuvash, and an important work of the seminary has been the preparation of Chuvash school-books.

This seminary was the fitting place for the translation of the Scriptures into Chuvash. Over thirty years ago, Dr. W. Nicolson, a former Agent of the Bible Society, suggested to Mr. Jacobleff the idea of making such a version. He gave himself to the realization of it, spending upon it much time and labour, and also much of his own money, though at the same time the Bible Society generously supported his translation-work. After several editions of the Gospels, singly and together, in 1902 a large edition of the Four Gospels and Acts and of the Psalms was published, and put into circulation in a few months. In 1903,

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Mr. Jacobleff printed, with the assistance from our Society, a small experimental edition of the Epistles. But the volume now projected will be the first complete Testament in Chuvash. It has again been carefully revised, and Mr. Jacobleff believes it now reaches the utmost perfection to which he and his assistants can bring it. The book will be printed at the Russian Government printing-office in Simbirsk.

Through all these years, work has also been done upon the Old Testament, and experimental editions of various parts have been published. The whole Old Testament is now practically ready for the compositor, and is only waiting till the problem of expense has been solved.

For the Gipsies.

One of the most interesting schemes now engaging the attention of the Society's Editorial Committee is the proposed versions in Romany for the use of the gipsies of Europe. Their exact number is not known, but a quarter of a million would be an outside estimate. Roughly speaking, gipsies can be classed under three heads. First, there are the wide wanderers, who pass backwards and forwards over the Continent from Russia to Spain, and sometimes even migrate to Siberia or America. The individual members of these nomadic bands are of various origin and speak different dialects, though they themselves are hardly conscious of the differences and can understand one another. Then there are other gipsy bands whose wanderings are restricted within a country or province, such as the gipsies of Great Britain, of Spain, and of Germany. Their tendency is to develop dialects more or less incomprehensible to their brethren in other lands. Moreover,

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Romany, as spoken among gipsies of this class, has lost its proper grammatical forms, and consists merely of a vocabulary of uninflected Romany words intermingled with some adopted foreign vernacular. The third class consists of sedentary gipsies. After three generations of sedentary life, gipsies, as a rule, entirely relinquish Romany in favour of the language of the regions where they are settled. The majority of gipsies, however, are bi-lingual, and retain an extraordinary love for their own Romany speech. The Christian evangelist must recognize this fact if he would win the respect and confidence of these wandering folk, who survive as relics of an earlier age. Reinhold Urban, in his tract entitled *Die Zigeuner und das Evangelium*, writes with reference to the Romany tongue: "With it one will often find the key to the hearts of these distrustful, reserved, brown people."

At present we are confronted with the difficulty that all gipsies are more or less illiterate. This obstacle, however, will diminish as time goes on. In many countries elementary education is being made compulsory even for nomads. Professor Finck, of Berlin, the well-known Romany expert, considers that their vocabulary is sufficiently rich to make a version of the New Testament into Romany quite practicable. He divides Romany into two main groups of dialects—the western and the eastern. The western includes Romany as current in Germany, Bohemia, Wales, and Italy; while the eastern includes the dialects of Greece, Turkey and Asia Minor, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. Of these eastern dialects the Greek Romany is the most ancient, besides being the most complete in its forms, and all eastern gipsies understand it. On the other hand, Gitano, or Spanish Romany, is so largely coloured by Spanish

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phraseology that George Borrow's version of St. Luke in Gitano has proved of little value outside the Peninsula.

It is not easy, however, to find competent scholars who are qualified to translate the Scriptures into Romany. The translation of St. Luke's Gospel into Eastern Romany has been undertaken for the Bible Society by Mr. Bernard Gilliat-Smith, of the British Consular Service at Constantinople, who has gained a thorough knowledge of the German gipsies' dialect from residence among the gipsies themselves, and has also spent several years in a close study of the chief philological works on Romany.

Speaking with Tongues.

Space forbids us to enumerate scores of other new translations or revisions which are going forward at the present time, under the Bible Society's auspices and largely at its expense. We may fitly conclude this section by quoting from a speech delivered last winter in Kensington Town Hall by the Bishop of London :—

“I ask you to stand by this Society as it goes on its way, really carrying out in modern form the old miracle of the tongues. When people say to me: ‘Is the Christian Church speaking with tongues?’ I say, ‘Yes, in the Bible Society.’ When you think that the Christian Church, through the Bible Society, has turned the old message into 412 languages and more, day after day, year after year, this seems to me the modern equivalent of the gift of tongues in early days.”

It is the high privilege of the Bible Society to serve as one chief instrument whereby God works to cancel the curse of Babel and to multiply the blessings of Pentecost.

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A GREAT COMPANY OF PUBLISHERS.

“The Lord gave the Word: great was the company of those that published it.”—PSALM LXVIII. 11.

After the Scriptures have been translated and revised, it remains that they should be printed and published. For this purpose more than sixty different alphabets and characters are needed. In certain countries, such as China, special paper is used, to suit the popular taste. Only about one-third of the volumes issued by the Society each year are printed in England and sent out from the London Bible House. The great bulk of the Society's output consists of editions of the Scriptures in foreign languages, which are printed as far as possible in the countries where they will find their readers. Thus, for example, Spanish Bibles are printed at Barcelona and Italian Bibles at Florence and Hungarian Bibles at Budapest, while Arabic Bibles come from the press of the American Mission at Beirût. Half a million volumes in five and twenty versions are bound every year in Berlin. All our Society's editions in Chinese and Japanese are printed and bound in the Far East, where this work can be most efficiently and economically carried out.

But it is not enough merely to print great editions of the Scriptures in hundreds of different versions. The Bible Society maintains dépôts for the storage and sale of its books in more than a hundred of the chief cities of the

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world. Such depôts are found, for example, at Rome, Moscow, Alexandria, Ispahân, Bombay, Johannesburg, Buenos Ayres, Winnipeg, Sydney, Seoul, Shanghai, and Singapore. From these central storehouses consignments of the Scriptures are sent out to booksellers and missionaries as need arises.

In this manner our Society labours to provide all Reformed Churches with the versions and editions required for their foreign missions. It co-operates with the missionaries in preparing the versions, it prints the editions they ask for in the form they desire, it bears the loss involved in selling the books at reduced prices, and it pays the carriage of the consignments to the remotest mission stations. How much trouble and expense the mere transit involves will be realized by one or two instances. It takes three months for a supply of Scriptures from our depôt at Shanghai to reach a missionary in some distant provinces of China. Recently seventeen cases of books were despatched from Shanghai to a mission at Liangchow, in the province of Kansu; they had to be sent first of all 1,500 miles by river, and then 500 miles more by mule across the mountains; the freightage alone cost more than the money value of the books themselves. Not long ago the Society spent £60 in freight in order to supply a remote African mission station with £100 worth of Scriptures. The payments for packing cases used at the Bible House in London during 1908 amounted to £540.

The Society expended last year £103,000 in translating, revising, printing, and binding the Scriptures.

Missions and the Bible.

To survey in a few sentences the prospects of Christian missions in non-Christian lands is to attempt

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the impossible. Yet wherever the unrest of humanity grows acute, we discover fresh openings and opportunities for the Gospel. In the words of an experienced observer: "Missionary work began by detaching men, one by one, from the old systems: now we are running great seams of disintegration through the old institutions and organizations—we are beginning to feel the gathered momentum of the past." The Bible Society has its own mission. Its silent messengers enter countries like Nepal, and Tibet, where missionaries fail to penetrate. By circulating last year 150,000 copies of the Scriptures in South America, it is leavening a continent which most missions neglect. And everywhere in the broad foreign policy of the Christian Church it plays an indispensable part. An American preacher has declared that what a road-bed is to a railway, the Bible is to missionary enterprise. "No reliable road-bed, no permanent train service; no well-sustained Bible Society, no permanence in missionary advance."

In the complicated task of distributing the Scriptures, the missionaries of every Reformed Communion are our most enthusiastic and untiring helpers. Experience teaches them the profound truth of the words which Bishop Steere wrote from East Africa—words which can never be quoted too often: "I feel here that our work must be all unsound without a vernacular Bible; and this," he added, "the Bible Society has made possible to us." The missionaries need the vernacular Scriptures for building up their converts and for training their native preachers and teachers. Unless a Christianized people possess the Bible and live by the Bible, neither individual believers nor the Church as a whole can ever arrive at maturity and strength. Holy Scripture is the original source and norm of Christian truth. The study



A TIBETAN LAMA, HOLDING BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES.

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and use of the vernacular Bible guarantees in the end the preservation of the Church through storms of persecution, and the revival of the Church in times of spiritual apathy.

At the Transvaal Missionary Conference which met in Johannesburg last autumn, our Society was described as "the foster-mother of missionary undertakings." It provides them with the books they need on such terms that the circulation is carried on without cost to the missions which receive and distribute the volumes.

The Witness of Missionaries.

We may cite a few recent testimonies from our missionary friends. In October, 1908, the Paris Evangelical Mission in Basutoland celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of its foundation. At that great festival of thanksgiving a special welcome was given to the Bible Society's Agent in the Transvaal by the Rev. C. Christeller, who spoke as follows :—

"The way your Society has helped us in our work is impossible to describe. The fruits we have reaped have been brought forth by the Book your Society has helped us to sell so cheaply that the poor as well as the rich have been able to buy it. If you travel through the whole country, whether along the mountains or along the plains, you will find in every village that the people have the Bible, the whole Bible, in their houses, and that they hold it as a treasure. We ask you to transmit our thanks, *the thanks of the Church of Basutoland, the thanks of the whole Basuto nation, to your Society*, which has given us such a treasure."

To-day the Paris Mission in Basutoland has nearly 25,000 adults enrolled as communicants or catechumens, and the contributions of these native Christians amount to £4,000 a year. In the Suto language, our Society

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has published over 36,000 Bibles and 126,000 New Testaments, and it has just issued an edition of 10,000 copies of the Pocket-Bible in this version.

On the Upper Congo.

In the summer of 1908 appeared the first edition of the Mongo New Testament, printed at the expense of our Society by the "Regions Beyond Missionary Union" Press at Bongandanga, in the Congo State. The following communication has since been received, signed by twenty-one missionaries on the Upper Congo:—

"We, missionaries of the Congo Balolo Mission, desire to express our heartfelt thanks for the kind interest and sympathy which the British and Foreign Bible Society has shown in our work of translation, and the invaluable help it has given us in the publication of the New Testament. It has been thought most suitable that at this time we, as members of this mission, should send a small donation as a token of our esteem and gratitude."

The letter encloses a gift of £5 11s., which is doubly valuable, coming, as it does, from these standard-bearers of faith in one of the dark places of the earth.

In Uganda.

Travellers in Central Africa grow eloquent over the fascination of the shores of the great equatorial fresh-water sea, where such a striking chapter has been written in the history of the modern Church. Sir H. M. Stanley declared that the story of Uganda missionary enterprise was an epic poem. The Bible Society has printed and sent out altogether more than a quarter of a million copies of the Scriptures in six different languages current in the Uganda Protectorate. The contrast is enormous between the pagan tribes of Central Africa, where there

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is no Bible, and the people of Uganda to-day. Everything that the native Christian in Uganda has learned about the Gospel, he has read for himself in his own language out of the Book in his own possession. For the C.M.S. missionaries in Uganda have realized the fact that no religious teaching is of value which is not founded upon the Word of God. The Bible permeates the life and thought of the people. An adherent of Christianity in native speech is called a "reader." In Uganda, a missionary does not ask a man, "Why do you not come to church?" but "Why do you not read?" The reading of the Bible, at present almost their only book, has led them into the way of salvation. By means of the printed page, the Spirit of God finds access and entrance to human hearts.

In the Bible Society's Egyptian Agency the following missions were supplied last year with Scriptures in the versions which they required at their respective centres of operation :—

The Church Missionary Society, the North Africa Mission, the United Free Church of Scotland Mission, the American Presbyterian Mission, the Reformed Presbyterian Mission, the Swedish Mission, the London Jews Society, the British Syrian Mission, the Edinburgh Medical Mission, the Irish Presbyterian Mission, the Presbyterian Church of England Mission, and 'La Mission Apostolique.'

The Printed Gospel.

Missionaries are keenly alive to the evangelistic value of the printed Gospels. We read, for example, in the report of the Batala Mission in the Panjab :— "Owing to sickness in the earlier part of the season, we were unable to reach more than 200 villages where there are no Christians. In most of these 200 villages we were able to sell one or more Gospels. The price is

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not much, but the influence of a single Gospel is infinitely more than it is in England. We do not give Gospels away, as we often find that the book is not valued if obtained free. We feel that the Gospel may speak and does speak to people, after the preacher has left."

In China.

Here is a characteristic testimony from China. The Rev. C. J. Voskamp, of Kiaochow, in the province of Shantung, writes as follows :—

"Whenever I am at one of our out-stations, I see the Christians, both men and women, with their Bibles wrapped up in a piece of silk or in a new handkerchief. These books are all issued by the British and Foreign Bible Society, which I deem to be one of the greatest benefactors to all the nations on the earth. What every missionary is longing for is to see his new converts become Bible Christians.

"In these Bibles, there are numerous red paper slips marked with annotations made during their study of the Bible. The Bible teaches them the Chinese characters, and from the Bible they learn to read. The Bible purifies their language. The Bible supplies them with new inscriptions, far deeper and more glorious in meaning, for their walls. The Bible cleanses their faces, their houses, and their habits. The Bible opens for them new views for this life and a brighter future. The Bible gives them a new sermon, a new prayer, and a new song of praise."

From Manchuria, an Irish Presbyterian missionary writes :—

"At any inn where I may be passing the night on a tour, I enjoy bringing out a bundle of the beautiful small edition of St. Mark's Gospel in coloured pattern-paper covers. After talking awhile to an attentive group, I ask them to buy. Long live the Society which issues the 'Good News' in an artistic form for half-a-farthing a volume!"

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In Korea.

A leading missionary in Korea writes:—"The greatest factor in our work has been the circulation of the Scriptures and their study as the Word of God." No other country in the world supplies such remarkable evidences of the evangelistic power of the New Testament. Again and again we hear of little companies of Christians gathered together in some heathen village, simply through reading the Scriptures; so that when the missionary visits the place where only a colporteur has been before him, he finds not only enquirers, but believers waiting for baptism.

In Saskatchewan.

We may close these testimonies by quoting a resolution which reached the Bible House from Canada during the summer of 1909:—

"The Synod of the Diocese of Saskatchewan desire to express their deep gratitude to the British and Foreign Bible Society for its liberality in publishing a revised version of the Holy Scriptures in the Cree Indian language. They realize the truly Christian generosity of the Society in providing the Word of God, not only for the millions of China and other thickly populated countries, but even for the few and scattered natives of this land, and they earnestly pray that God's abundant blessing may rest on the Society and its glorious work."

To prepare and produce a first edition of 1,000 copies of the revised Cree Bible—including the expense of making plates—has cost our Society altogether £1,800, or 36s. a copy. These Bibles are sold to their Indian readers at an almost nominal price. Only the merest fraction of the sum expended upon the edition can come back to the Society from the proceeds of its sale.

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THE UNREST OF THE WORLD.

A Society which has no frontier, and whose servants are busy in the four corners of the earth, is compelled to take wide views of things. To-day we are looking out upon a world of unrest, with thunder on the horizon. The horoscope of the future is written over with signs of incalculable change. And yet Christians have learned how to face social upheavals and political revolutions without dismay. We believe that at the root of human unrest there is a hunger and thirst after some better thing. And when we see earthly principalities and powers shaken into the dust, we can lift up our heads, because we know that by means of these very changes redemption draweth nigh.

In most civilized countries scientific men have established observatories, with delicate instruments to register shocks and concussions caused by the earthquakes which vibrate through the crust of the globe. The Bible House may be compared to a seismological observatory, where perturbations and upheavals in remote places are detected and recorded, as they produce their effect upon the circulation of the Scriptures. Even literal earthquakes create claims on our Society. After the appalling disaster in Sicily and South Italy during the closing days of 1908, Italian Testaments and Gospels were freely distributed among the distressed survivors, and one of our colporteurs at Palermo did excellent service among the refugees and wounded from Messina. Gifts of



AN OLD TURK.

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English Bibles and Testaments have also been sent to various churches and Sunday-schools in Jamaica, whose buildings and books were destroyed by the terrible earthquake in 1907.

Transformation in Turkey.

But when we turn to regions of political and social disturbance, we realise how intimately the Bible Society is connected with the nations of the world. In Turkey, for example, men have witnessed during the last few months—to quote the words of Mr. Asquith—“one of the most amazing revolutions in the annals of history.” It sounded like a fairy tale to hear that at Constantinople a Constitutional Parliament had assembled, which included two elected representatives from Jerusalem. A fresh epoch has opened in the Near East, and every Christian must hope that the corrupt and degraded despotism which ruled so long at Yildiz Kiosk has finally vanished, and that out of this national upheaval a better and happier Turkey will rise on the ruins of the old. For a century the Bible Society has been issuing edition after edition of the Christian Scriptures in Turkish, in Greek, in Armenian, in Bulgarian, in Albanian, in Arabic, in Servian, in Rumanian, in Hebrew—and in all the many tongues spoken by the mixed nationalities under Ottoman rule. But the Society’s efforts have been hampered and thwarted by the bigotry and perversity which made Old Turkey the despair of her friends. The Bible was regarded as an instrument of revolt, and the colporteur as a political agent preaching sedition. The Sultan’s censorship of the press was carried to fantastic extremes. Certain versions of the Scriptures did not escape condemnation. In their efforts to suppress everything Macedonian, the

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censors required the word "Macedonia" to be erased from the Acts of the Apostles, and the official title "Vilayets of Salonika and Monastir" to be substituted; they would not suffer the man of Macedonia to call across the sea, "Come over and help us." A story is told that certain books on chemistry were confiscated, because they contained the cryptic symbol H_2O —which stands for water; the censors in their wisdom imagined this to signify "Hamid the Second is a cipher." Not long ago a number of Gospels were sent to Salonika by the National Bible Society of Scotland, bearing on their cover the picture of an aged Jew standing at the gate of Jerusalem, while underneath were Greek words meaning "the gate of the city." Now to a Greek "the city" stands for the metropolis, *i.e.*, Constantinople, where the Greek Patriarch resides. The censor at Salonika insisted that this picture would be taken to represent a Dervish standing at the gate of Constantinople, and that it would be an incentive to the Greeks to try and recapture the ancient Byzantine capital. So the covers had to be torn off before the books were admitted.

In the Balkans.

One great benefit of the new Turkish Government, as far as the Bible Society is concerned, appears in Albania. Down to the summer of 1908 our colporteurs in Albania and Macedonia were watched by hostile authorities and persecuted by police agents and spies. For many years the Society had been forbidden to issue the Albanian Scriptures in what is known as the 'national' character. Editions were allowed in the Gheg and Tosk dialects, but these make the Gospel accessible to comparatively few Albanians. Early in

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1909, however, we have been permitted to print an edition of the Four Gospels at Monastir in the new Albanian character, and our staff has been strengthened so that these books may pass promptly into the hands and homes of the people.

Our Sub-agent at Monastir writes :—"The marvellous changes which have happened in our country mean much for the people of the Balkans, and not less for the Bible Society, since the doors have been opened wide for the Scriptures which bring light and salvation. When I think of our troubles and difficulties and hindrances, of the fear which possessed every Albanian who dared to buy a copy of the Scriptures in his own tongue, all that has happened seems to me like a dream. I can hardly believe that, when our books arrive now, we can put them forthwith into the hands of the colporteurs; whereas formerly months of valuable time were wasted in endeavours to get them sealed and stamped by the local censors. Sales in Albania have never been so high as they have been since the Constitution was proclaimed. Many schools have been opened, and the Albanian language is to be taught in the Turkish schools there. This reminds me of the need for hastening the translation of the entire Bible into Albanian, which the Albanians are looking for with the greatest eagerness. Our colporteurs reach the remotest corners of the country, help the poor shepherd, comfort the sick and the prisoner. On my last tour in Albania, I was amazed to find what the people knew of our Society, and how much its work is appreciated. Though the people are generally uneducated, yet the Bible can be found in homes where you would least expect it."

This new era of liberty in the Turkish Empire is a strange and welcome experience. Apparently it will grant us all we have ever asked—freedom to distribute the Scriptures in the languages of the people.

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The East-End of Europe.

The disturbed condition of south-eastern Europe last autumn focussed attention upon the rival races which mingle and conflict there. Our Society is probably the only British institution which carries on regular and systematic Christian work in every one of the countries in question. Nor is it without significance that among these peoples there is a manifest deepening of interest in the Scriptures. We cannot doubt that spiritual forces are evoked by crises in national existence, and that in an atmosphere of patriotism and self-devotion men's hearts grow sensitive to the Word of God. For the hardy peasants of Bulgaria, who include over 3,000,000 adherents of the Orthodox Church, our printers have been unable to supply enough copies of the Bulgarian New Testament to meet the demand. In the Kingdom of Servia, where nearly the whole population belong nominally to the Orthodox Church, two devoted colporteurs have been traversing the country for years, journeying with a horse and cart, which enables them to visit sequestered villages and hamlets. In Rumania, again, our Bible workers have had remarkable success ; the circulation in 1908 is more than double the result reported six years ago.

The Orthodox Church.

In all these countries the priests of the Orthodox Church, as a rule, show themselves friendly to the distribution of the Scriptures, and will even stand by the colporteur's side and assist him in his work. On the *boulevard* at Bucharest, a priest took his place beside our colporteur and urged the passers-by to purchase the Scriptures ; the Bible, he said, was the best book in existence. In Wallachia a colporteur describes how



A FISHERMAN'S HUT ON THE BOSPHORUS.

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he accepted an invitation to visit a certain priest's village on the next holiday. When he arrived by sledge—for it was winter—the priest stood beside the sledge in the snow. A crowd gathered, and the priest read the Bible aloud to the people and explained it: "We priests," he concluded, "can tell you nothing in our churches, save that which is written in this Book." Thirty Bibles, and more than thirty Testaments, were sold in that village. The Servian 'popes'—or parish priests—are invariably friendly, and will sometimes accompany the colporteur and recommend his books. In Croatia a colporteur visited a theological seminary for Servian priests at Karlovicz, and sold a number of Bibles and Testaments in Servian and other languages. From Dalmatia our colporteur writes: "In towns where the inhabitants belong to the Greek Church, they are friends of the Bible Society. In such places I always go first to the priest, and I must say that hitherto they have all received me with kindness. On a recent occasion one priest announced my presence from the pulpit, and told his flock that they ought now to seize the opportunity of procuring the Scriptures, pointing out also the value of God's Word in the household; and thus in every family where the people could read I sold a copy." The same colporteur describes how hospitably he was entertained by the monks in a Greek monastery, and how, at another town, he was invited by a bishop to the Old Catholic seminary, where he sold more than 100 volumes among the students.

The Greek Patriarch at Constantinople has permitted our Society to purchase a large number of copies of his own recently published edition of the New Testament in the original Greek. These books have considerably assisted our colporteurs in their work, not only in Greece,

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but also among the islands of the Ægean. In Crete, bishops and monks are friendly to the Bible Society. We deeply regret that copies of the Modern Greek version of the New Testament are still prohibited from entering the Kingdom of Greece.

In Russia.

In the Russian Empire two movements of religious significance force themselves upon our attention, both of them springing from the emancipation which has come to pass in quite recent years. One is a movement of recoil from Christianity. The people have been carried away from their moorings by a flood of new ideas on political, social, and economic questions. The material conditions of life have become exclusively important to them; the perspective of values has changed; men are awakened as out of a sleep, and they seem to themselves to have come into a new world of thought and action, wherein Christianity has no part. Side by side with this, however, we note a remarkable religious movement, taking place for the most part outside the Russian Orthodox Church. In many towns and villages new congregations are being formed and obtaining legal registration. For generations past our Society has received special encouragement and assistance in Russia, alike from Church and State. Every year we draw something like 350,000 copies of the Scriptures in Russ and Slavonic from the printing presses of the Holy Synod at St. Petersburg. Throughout the dominions of the Tsar, the village 'popes' almost everywhere countenance and assist our colporteurs, nearly all of whom belong to the Russian Orthodox Church.

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The Church of Rome.

In strange and unhappy contrast we have to face the hostility of the Roman Church in nearly all countries where it exercises power. The ultramontane policy which controls the Vatican inspires bitter opposition to the circulation of the Bible without note or comment in the language of the common people. Austria presents a melancholy example of this clerical intolerance translated into law. In certain Austrian provinces—Upper Austria, Salzburg, and the Tyrol, for instance—the authorities persistently refuse to grant our colporteurs any licenses whatever; and throughout the Austrian dominions it is a criminal offence for a colporteur to sell a Bible in any other way than by booking an order for it. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria deeply concerns the Bible Society, since it brings these lands within the scope of the Austrian press-laws. Hitherto in Bosnia our colporteurs have been unshackled by regulations which compel them to go about with ‘samples,’ and forbid them to sell their books direct. Meanwhile, it is noteworthy that the sale of obscene prints goes on unhindered in Vienna and other great Austrian cities, where such gutter-stuff is freely exposed in shop-windows and restaurants.

The same spirit of ecclesiastical intolerance obtains, though to a somewhat less degree, among the Latin nations of Europe. It rises, however, to a climax in the Republics of South America, where the Roman Church appears in its most corrupt and superstitious form. Religious liberty has been generally established by law; but we hear far too often of Bible-burnings, instigated or carried out by priests, who do their

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utmost to lay hands on any copies of the Scriptures which their people may have purchased from the colporteurs.

The Coptic Church.

It is not without relief that we look away to those communions which still represent ancient Christianity in the East, among which the Bible is not a forbidden book.

The modern Copts, who number probably not far short of a million, trace back their lineage to the ancient Egyptians who built the pyramids at Gizeh. The Coptic Church has survived twelve centuries of Moslem persecution and oppression. In its liturgy it virtually uses the tongue which represents what was spoken in Egypt 3,000 years ago. The Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria, Cyril the Fifth, claims to be the 112th successor of St. Mark, and has under his jurisdiction four Metropolitans, including the Metropolitan of the Abyssinian Church, as well as fifteen other bishops. One characteristic feature of the Coptic Church is the large amount of Holy Scripture which is read in its services. While its priests are often most imperfectly educated, sixty-five young Copts have recently been appointed lay-preachers and deliver Arabic sermons at the ordinary services or in churches at special times. These preachers are found mostly in Cairo and the chief towns of the Delta. In October, 1907, a decree of the Khedive gave permission to the Copts and other Christians to have their own faith taught in the Government schools, on condition that they provide and pay the necessary teachers. Already Bible-teaching is being given in ten Government schools in Cairo, which are

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attended by about 500 young Copts. Arabic Gospels and Testaments for this purpose are being provided on nominal terms by our Society.

The Coptic Patriarch and the Bible Society.

The Coptic Church in Egypt has manifested a lively practical interest in our Society, which has endeavoured to strengthen this good feeling by showing its sympathy with the Church. In September, 1908, it presented a beautifully bound copy of the Arabic Bible to the Coptic Patriarch at Alexandria. His Holiness acknowledged the gift by a letter, of which the following is a translation :—

“ May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ enjoyed by His Saints and Apostles settle on you, our dear and beloved friends, the President and the Members of the Committee of the British Bible Society. May God bless you all. With Christian greetings and in the love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we have pleasure in making known to you that the Holy Bible presented to us by you has been gladly received. Therefore we take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation of this valuable gift. In closing, we pray that the noble work of the British Bible Society may be crowned with success and may ever be to the glory of Jesus.

“(*Signed*) KERILLOS V.,

“ Patriarch of St. Mark’s Apostleship 112.”

A similar Bible was also presented to the Coptic Archbishop of Behera and Menoufieh, who resides at Alexandria and was equally cordial in his gratitude and sympathy. Shortly after the presentation he paid a visit to the Society’s headquarters in Alexandria, and was surprised and deeply interested to learn that our Egyptian Agency circulates the Scriptures in nearly

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seventy different languages every year. The Archbishop made a donation to the Society's funds, and a Coptic Auxiliary was formed last year in Egypt, which has already raised £20 for the same object.

In a Georgian Church.

Mr. C. T. Hooper, who now has charge of the Society's Egyptian Agency, paid a visit to Syria in 1908, and addressed several Bible-meetings at Alexandretta. Mr. Hooper writes :

“ I obtained permission to address a large gathering in the Georgian church. The people listened most attentively to my story of the Bible Society and its great work. The old priest was present with all the leading men of his community, who at the close expressed their good wishes for the Society and their pleasure in what they had heard. The local missionaries say that this is the first time that a Protestant has been allowed to speak in the Georgian church.”

The Syrian Patriarch of Antioch.

The ancient Syrian Church of Mesopotamia, otherwise known as the Jacobite Church, has only one Patriarch, who is elected from among the bishops by the suffrages of the whole Church, the laity as well as the clergy, and then confirmed in his office by the Turkish Sultan. In 1874-5 the then Patriarch, Ignatius Peter III., visited England by invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Tait, and was received by the Queen at Windsor. He was accompanied by Bishop Abdalla, named Gregorius—which is the official name of the Syrian bishops who hold, or have held, the See of Jerusalem. In 1888 Bishop Abdalla Mar Gregorius, who was then occupying the See of Emesa (Homs), again visited England during the meeting of the

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Lambeth Conference, and took back with him to Mesopotamia a gift of paper and binding materials granted by the Bible Society for a new edition of the Syriac Bible. Early in 1909, Bishop Mar Gregorius, who has now succeeded to the Patriarchal Chair of Antioch, came to London for the third time, in the interests of the education of his Church and people. He visited the Bible House, and the Committee have presented him with a large number of printed copies of the Scriptures in Syriac and Arabic. The books will be sent out to Mardin, which has been for many centuries the seat of the Patriarchate.

In Abyssinia.

For many years no missionary enterprise has been permitted in Abyssinia. Yet through the Swedish Evangelical Mission at Eritrea, copies of the Scriptures in Ethiopic, Amharic, Galla, and Tigrinya, provided by our Society, pass in considerable numbers into this closed land. One member of the mission, the Rev. Karl Cederquist, has been permitted of late to reside at Adis Abeba, where he receives and distributes Bibles and Testaments in Ethiopic, Amharic, and other Abyssinian languages, sent out to him by our Society. It is curious to learn that a consignment of 370 volumes which was despatched from Alexandria in July, 1907, arrived at Adis Abeba only in March, 1908. Mr. Cederquist wrote as follows in March, 1909 :—

“ Our book-store here will soon run short of Amharic Bibles, single Gospels, and copies of the Four Gospels and Acts. At first no one would buy these last-named books ; but by and by the people got to like both the single Gospels and the handy little volume containing the Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. The complete Bible in Amharic is liked by many. Time after time people talk about the joy they felt when they

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had learnt to read the Bible in their own tongue, and found that they could understand it, although their priests told them that they never would."

Our Committee at once agreed to send out to Mr. Cederquist a fresh supply of the Amharic Scriptures which he asked for in this letter.

In South Africa.

The legislative union so lately achieved in South Africa has doubtless been brought about by more causes than one. Great financial and commercial interests and the need for public economy convinced all parties that the change was imperative. But the possibility of such co-operation between leaders who were so recently opposed in bloody warfare was rooted in something deeper than material concerns. One chief factor in the blending together of the white races has undoubtedly been their common regard for those Scriptures which our Society has so widely and generously distributed in South Africa. Common religious faith has dissolved racial prejudices and distrust, and made co-operation possible. The Speaker of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, General Beyers, addressing the last annual Bible-meeting in Johannesburg, declared that "the power lay in the Bible. It was because of that book that the people of the Transvaal were living in peace and harmony ; and it was from that cause that they found in the bosoms of the Dutch people no feeling of revenge against the English."

In Madagascar.

The secularist tendencies of France have been emphasized by the French Colonial authorities in Madagascar, where the present Governor-General has

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shown unmistakably his intense dislike of all religious work and influence. In the words of Dr. G. L. King, the Anglican Bishop in Madagascar, "the missionary is discouraged, and to some extent hindered, by an anti-Christian government . . . It seeks to overthrow, not this or that ecclesiastical system, but the name and power of Christ." Three-quarters of the Protestant mission schools, which formerly contained 200,000 scholars, have now been closed. The greatest difficulties are thrown in the way of getting permission to build new churches or to rebuild old ones. The revival of heathen customs, dances and songs, often of the most questionable character, is encouraged. In the face of this open hostility and covert attack, in spite of official influence brought to bear on the weaker race and the constant appeal to self-interest to reject or neglect the Christian religion, the Church in Madagascar is not proving faithless to its high and heroic history. Thousands of Malagasy Christians remain loyal to the Gospel. Prayers are offered up in public for the success of missionary efforts, such as have not been heard in more quiet and peaceful times. The converts are standing firm, and voluntary native helpers are coming forward.

Yet under such conditions it is not surprising to learn that the circulation of the Scriptures in Madagascar has declined from over 17,000 copies in 1906 to under 10,000 in 1908. At the united request of all the Protestant missions in the island, our Committee resolved early in 1909 to employ twenty-four native Christian colporteurs in Madagascar, who will sell the Scriptures in the markets and villages under the direction of the missionaries themselves. One generous friend in England has undertaken to support twelve of these colporteurs.

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In Persia.

Last year's events in Persia have resulted in a state of anarchy for which no cure has yet been found. The chaotic condition of the country makes the task of the missionary and the Bible-seller perilous, and well-nigh impossible. Nor is it easy to foresee the outcome. A secular despotism in Persia might prove less intolerant of Christianity than a 'Parliament' filled with Moslem fanatics.

The Indian Empire.

During 1908 India has drawn the attention of the world to a greater degree than in any year since the Mutiny. The calm of the last half-century has been succeeded in certain provinces and districts by stormy disaffection and sedition. In its leading article, Feb. 12th, 1909, the *Calcutta Statesman* wrote most sympathetically of our Society's beneficent work in Bengal, where the dissemination of the Scriptures has recently been beset with peculiar difficulties owing to political hostility against everything that is foreign. In some cases buyers of the Gospels have been told that "it was wrong for supporters of *swadeshi* to purchase the book." The *Statesman* continues :

"We do not suppose for one moment that this deplorable attitude has the sanction or approval of any of the leaders of educated Indian opinion; for, whether they accept Christianity or not, they cannot but be aware of the moral worth of its teaching, and therefore would not wittingly put obstacles in the way of the circulation of such noble and elevating literature as the Bible contains. . . . As at the present time, movements are developing in Bengal which call for readiness on the part of the Society to cope with them, it is well that Christian people and others who value the Bible should realize that their help is now required more than ever.



A MARATHA OF THE DECCAN.

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Whole communities have been quickened with aspirations for social advance. . . It can readily be imagined that among such peoples the circulation of the Bible may have an incalculable influence for good ; and the Bible Society should therefore be placed in a position to pursue its work with energy and zeal. Nor do we disguise the conviction that, in the critical period through which India is passing, the work of shaping a social and political fabric worthy of the traditions of England and of the aspirations of the educated classes of India would proceed on surer lines and with infinitely less friction if the ideal of the Society were accomplished and the Bible were placed in every man's hand."

India to-day is seething with a ferment of ideas and aspirations—produced by contact with the culture of the West. Many of these ideas have a directly Christian origin. Others, again, are the fruit of the materialistic and atheistic literature which has been sown broadcast over the land. To the sinister influence of such literature there is one supreme antidote : the mind and heart of India must be permeated with the Bible. Last year our Society circulated 680,000 copies of the Scriptures in the Indian Empire.

In the Malay Peninsula.

Quite recently the British possessions in Malaya have been augmented by a strip of territory lying between South Siam and the northern borders of the Federated Malay States. This territory, which has now passed from the control of the Siamese Government, includes Kelantan, Tringanu, Kedah, and other states, forming an area altogether as large as Servia. More than twenty years ago, when no Christian missionaries had entered Kelantan or Tringanu, agents of the Bible Society were distributing Malay Testaments and Gospels

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there, until the native rulers intervened. Under the new order of things, we trust that it will be possible to renew this earlier attempt.

In China.

A new Emperor of China has commenced his reign auspiciously, and the missionary outlook is full of promise. Nominally, religious freedom does not exist ; but in practice—apart from the restrictions on students in Government schools and colleges and on the higher officials—there is in China as wide a tolerance and as unrestricted an opportunity for missionary work as in any non-Christian nation. Nowhere else on earth are such vast religious issues trembling in the balance. “Can any Christian contemplate the prospect of this people breaking away from their ancient and cherished past—not knowing whither they are tending, nor who are their best guides, nor what is their safe goal—without being deeply moved? Rival voices are calling, rival prophets attracting, and rival claims striving for the mastery of this people, who constitute, in population at least, the greatest factor in the world’s life.”

With profound thankfulness we record that the circulation of the Scriptures in China has out-stripped all previous records. Our own Society distributed 1,365,000 copies last year, more than ninety-nine per cent. of which were actually sold. To quote from the China Inland Mission report, “Gates of brass have been broken and bars of iron cut asunder, so that the land which Morrison found closed against the Gospel and without a Bible, is now not only open throughout its length and breadth and possessed of the Word of God in its own tongue, but has a Protestant Church with some

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200,000 communicants and probably about three-quarters of a million adherents."

In the Far East.

Elsewhere in the Far East, we can also rejoice over favourable omens and widening opportunities. In the south-west provinces of Japan, our Society, which works here in partnership with the National Bible Society of Scotland, sent out last year the unprecedented number of 311,000 books.

In Korea, through much tribulation, multitudes are entering the kingdom of God. The results of the wonderful religious awakening have shown themselves in an eagerness for the Scriptures which it has been often difficult to satisfy. Nearly 46,000 Korean New Testaments and 116,000 portions of Scripture were sold last year. Protestant missions report 85,000 communicants and catechumens — which means a Christian community of at least a quarter of a million—who are importunate for the complete Bible in their own tongue. The work of translating the Old Testament makes steady progress, and we earnestly hope that before very many months the Korean Bible will be printed and published.

"Korea is dragged out of her age-long darkness and slumber, into the stern light of the warfare and ambitions of stronger nations. Oppressed, outraged, her self-respect all bruised, forced reluctantly into inevitable subordination, the iron has entered into her soul. Where shall she find comfort? The Word of God has been put into her hand just in time. Tens of thousands are reading it, societies in remote villages are formed for studying it, and mighty waves of spiritual influence are sweeping over the land. It is Pentecost to-day, and the words of the New Testament are the tongues in which men tell the wondrous deeds of God."

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This imperfect review may fitly conclude with a contrast which Dr. W. T. A. Barber has drawn in eloquent words. Not many months ago, there swept into Peking the train bearing the Dalai Lama from Tibet—the mysterious, incarnate Buddha emerging from his remote, inviolable solitudes. And as he reached the railway station at Peking—itself not long ago unknown to the outside nations—there stood upon the platform the Bible Society's colporteur, who during this last year sold there nearly 15,000 Gospels and Testaments. O striking symbol ! The far-away darknesses and superstitions of mankind are coming, thick and fast, within our ken : as they come, waiting to greet them stands the Living Word, which drives away all darkness, opening the doors of the palace of new thought, healing the ache of unknown sorrow, bearing the power that transforms the world.

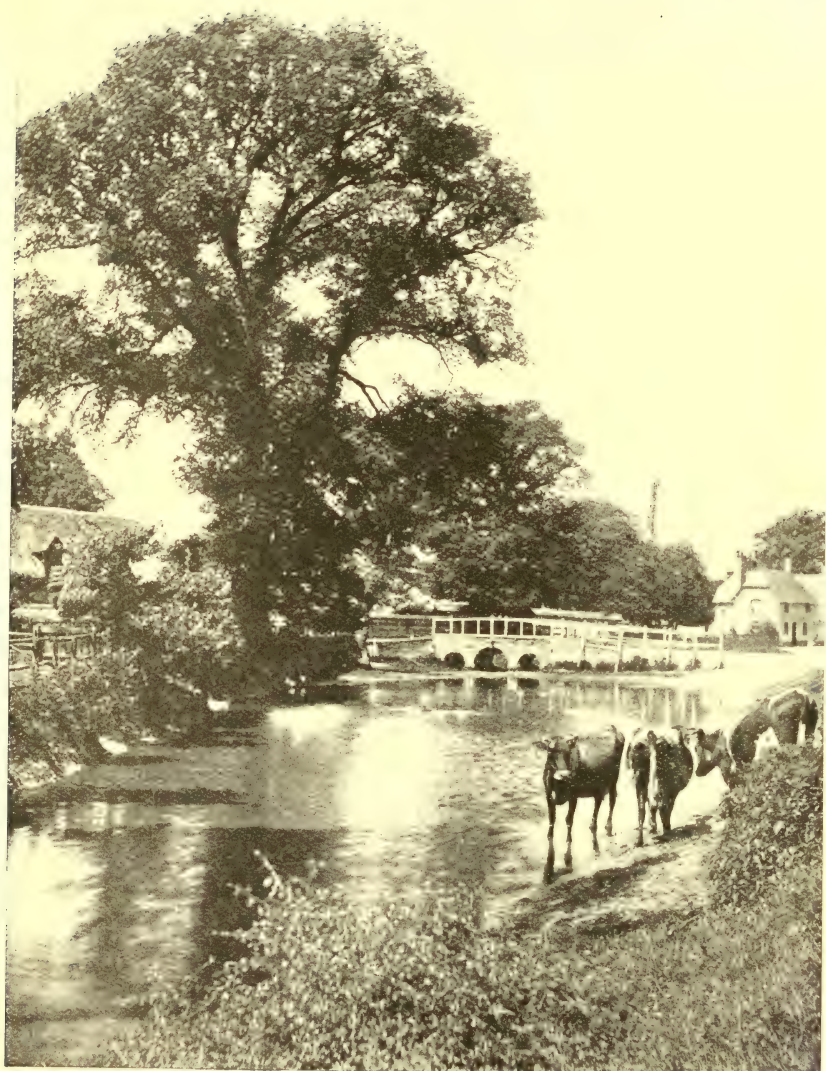


Photo Groat Engraving Co.

‘WHERE SUMMER AFTERNOONS ARE SPACIOUS.’

THE MIGRATION OF COMMON PEOPLE.

No phenomenon in the present day is more impressive than the tides and currents of migration which year by year carry fresh multitudes away from their native shores. A century ago only rich men could travel. To-day hosts of labouring folk are moving to new homes in distant countries. Silently, ceaselessly, the great exodus goes on, mainly among the poor. In every continent it is arousing fierce political and social conflict, and it promises to work out strange international results in the blending of races and the fusion of tongues. Everywhere it creates new needs and opportunities for that missionary service which is the peculiar function of the Bible Society.

The peasants of Europe are gravitating towards the open spaces of America. From all parts of Austria-Hungary, from Russia and Poland, from Italy, Servia, Bulgaria and Rumania, a stream of emigration flows westwards, year by year growing stronger and deeper. The great majority of continental emigrants sail from the German ports of Bremen and Hamburg, entering Germany for this purpose at Myslowitz, the railway-junction where the frontiers of Germany, Austria, and Russia meet. At these three centres—Myslowitz, Bremen, and Hamburg—the Bible Society watches for the emigrants with its colporteurs. Last year the financial crisis and industrial depression in the United States hindered tens of thousands who would otherwise

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have set out for the new world ; but there is every prospect that the outflow of population will speedily resume its former volume. At Myslowitz, Colporteur Jendrny can speak most of the Slav languages, and has also acquired a certain amount of Hebrew and Yiddish, in order to converse with the crowds of Jews leaving Russia and Poland for the States. At Bremen, Colporteur Pliska makes such good use of a tricycle presented to him by an English friend, that he has gained the name of "the flying book-seller." He is specially qualified for his task by his remarkable colloquial knowledge of Central European languages. Recently he has picked up Rumanian, and is now able to "get along" in fifteen different forms of speech. Often, however, a kindly action has more influence than a long harangue. Here is a quaint example. Pliska saw a group of Ruthenians sitting in the Emigration Hall at Bremen, one of whom had a long rent in his coat. They gave no heed to the colporteur's books ; but he left the volumes for them to look at, saying that he would be back in a minute. He returned with needle and thread, which he gave to the man with the torn coat. This friendly act touched their hearts, and they bought six copies of the Scriptures in Ruthenian. Among these continental emigrants last year our Society sold or gave away nearly 15,000 copies of the Scriptures in the following languages :—Polish, Russ, Bohemian, Servian, Sloven, Croatian, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Italian, Hungarian, German, Yiddish, and Hebrew. This may sound a dry statement : yet a little imagination will reveal the immense value of such work and the advantage of bringing God's Word to these crowds of travellers, all on their way to a new world and a new life.



OUTSIDE ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND.

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In Canada.

Immigrants landing in the United States are cared for by the American Bible Society. Those who enter Canada are welcomed by the agents of our great Canadian Auxiliary, who meet them when they come ashore and present them with copies of the Gospels in their varied mother-tongues, giving them also information for their journey westwards and an opportunity to write letters to their friends at home. Among the motley groups of aliens, the Scriptures are valued and treasured. Canada's first gift to her new settlers is carried with them as they travel westwards, to produce its results in the heart, the home, and the nation. Here is an illustration. Among the hundreds of new arrivals by one steamer at Quebec came a group of Russians, each of whom received a little Russ Gospel. A few months later those same men were working in one of the camps on a western railway-line, and were seen in their leisure reading Russ Bibles. How had they obtained the books? Their curiosity and interest had been aroused by the Gospels, and, not knowing that Russ Bibles could be bought in Canada, they had written home to St. Petersburg for copies.

It is not easy to realize the polyglot population of the Dominion. About two persons in every five speak French. There are more than 100,000 Red Indians, for whom our Society has issued the Scriptures in fifteen languages. But the settlers from Europe far outnumber these. The German population of Manitoba and Saskatchewan now amounts to 75,000, and is increasing by about 2,000 a year; there are seventy German churches, whose pastors are very friendly to our Society. Some foreign communities, such as the Dukhobors, Galicians, and Mennonites, live to a large

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extent isolated from the settlers round about them. In Manitoba, we hear of an Icelandic Synod of the Lutheran Church. A colporteur near Port Arthur writes :—"I visited some Croatians, who bought ten Testaments ; the month before they had bought four Bibles and five Testaments. Among some Finns, I sold eight Bibles." At a lumber-mill in British Columbia, our agent found nearly 100 East Indians at work, most of them Sikhs. Not without need, therefore, the Canadian Auxiliary has largely increased its staff of Bible-sellers. Last year, forty colporteurs were engaged for longer or shorter periods. They carried the Scriptures in forty-four languages across the prairies and through the forests of the Dominion, taking the trails to lumber and mining-camps and visiting the bunk-houses there, searching out lonely farmsteads and isolated shacks, everywhere appearing as Christian friends and messengers of the Word of God.

In South Africa.

We find a still stranger medley of nations and kindreds and tongues in South Africa. From the Society's dépôt at Johannesburg the Scriptures have been sold in seventy-three different versions. Since Chinese coolies were introduced into the Transvaal, our Society has placed in their hands nearly 7,000 books, mostly Gospels, in Mandarin and Easy Wênli ; but, as a consequence of the gradual repatriation of these coolies, the sales of Chinese Scriptures at Johannesburg were more than 2,000 fewer in 1908 than they were in 1907.

The seventy gold mines on the Witwatersrand stretch for forty miles from east to west ; but Mr. Irving, our colporteur at these mines, has a sphere of influence

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immeasurably wider than that area. Within the labour district of the Rand, 234,000 native Africans are employed, gathered from almost every part of South Africa, from the Cape to Lake Nyasa, while even British Central Africa supplies its quota.

The following extracts from Mr. Irving's reports speak for themselves :—"On coming to the Geduld Mine I found that 1,500 Amaxosa boys had arrived. A good many purchased Bibles." These Amaxosa, or Kafirs, come from Cape Colony, and last year we distributed 2,271 copies of the Scriptures in their tongue. "I sold several Testaments to natives from German West Africa, and one to a Hottentot from Namaqualand." . . . "At the Windsor Mine we were surrounded by a crowd of Bechuana lads, who expressed their delight and bought a goodly number of Chuana Scriptures." . . . "I visited the location of the Damaras and sold quite a number of Herero books." . . . "A Shangaan bought six Chi-Tonga Testaments. Two years ago, at the Robinson Mine, he had learned to know the Lord Jesus, and as he was going home he wanted to take the Testaments with him." . . . "We sold a good many of the recently published Testaments in Union Nyanja to the boys from Livingstonia." . . . "On asking one of them what he knew about Christianity, he pulled out his well-worn copy, and said, 'I came here all the way from Fort Johnstone, and *this has been my staff.*'"

"At the Dynamite Factory there was a company of the Ma-Karanga boys. They were delighted and astonished when they saw the Karanga Gospels, not knowing that the Scriptures had been translated into their tongue. They had been taught to read by a native teacher, and had become Christians since they reached the Rand. They bought all the Karanga books I had, and asked me to bring more." . . . "On taking the Amharic Scriptures to the natives who ordered them, I found that most of them had left, but others bought the books and were greatly pleased."

"In the course of one afternoon, at the Simmer en Jack Mine, I sold the Scriptures in Arabic, Sheetswa, Thonga, Chi-

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Tonga, Ronga, Pedi, Bemba, Zulu, Suto, Xosa, Dutch, English, Portuguese, and Nyanja.”

The four Basuto chiefs who visited London in February, 1909, were presented by our Committee with specially bound copies of the Suto Bible, each bearing an illuminated inscription. In acknowledging the gift, Seiso, the leading chief, said with impressive simplicity, “This Book is the link between us and you.”

From Russia into Siberia.

The stream of migration from Russia into Siberia has been rapidly increasing since the close of the war with Japan. During 1907, as many as 700,000 new settlers passed eastwards along the trans-Siberian railway, and the total for 1908 was 760,000. Sometimes as many as 6,000 pass through in a single day. Most of these are Russians seeking new homes, and many of them are extremely poor. At Cheljabinsk railway station, which is the door into Siberia, our colporteurs meet the emigrant trains. Besides thousands of copies which were sold, 2,500 Testaments or Gospels were given away last year to people too impoverished to purchase even the cheapest editions. Early in the spring, Colporteur Michailoff obtained a permit from the chief of the police to work in the barracks built at Cheljabinsk for these immigrants. He writes :—

“All who receive the copies are grateful ; many send their little ones up to me to kiss my hand and thank me for the ‘Bread of Life.’ At first I show them the covers of my volumes, and explain who is giving them these copies of the Book which shows them the way of salvation. Then I tell them about the Bible Society, and the great work it carries on in all lands. It is a responsible duty, and I pray God to give me wisdom to fulfil it in the right spirit.”



Photo by N. P. Edgards.

RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS INTO SIBERIA.

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Out in Central Asia, where the Chinese and Tatar mingle with the Turk, the Persian and the Russian, one heroic missionary, the Rev. G. W. Hunter, of the C.I.M., holds the field. He has needed Scriptures in eight different languages and these it has been our privilege to supply. "Let me say," he writes, "how I value the ungrudging help of the Bible Society in all my work ! I often meet people to whom I cannot talk one word ; but the Bible Society comes to my aid with its polyglot gift of tongues, so that I can supply them with the precious books which they may take and read in their tents or distant hill-encircled homes."

The Asiatic Abroad.

The same flux and flow of races may be found in unexpected corners of the world. It is difficult to realize, for instance, that over forty languages are current in Burma, excluding dialects not yet reduced to writing. Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, and Chinese are spoken there by hundreds of thousands of immigrants, for whom as yet not a single English or American missionary has been set apart. To them, as to many others, God's gracious Word is brought, if brought at all, only in the printed Gospel as sold by our Society's colporteurs. In the Far East the Chinese are everywhere. We hear of a Chinese colporteur being sent to his fellow-countrymen at Vladivostock and on the banks of the river Amur in Siberia. A Russian colporteur is being sent to work among the Russians in Manchuria, while Japanese colporteurs visit the Japanese in Formosa. In the picturesque and polyglot island of Mauritius, six colporteurs are employed—four Hindus, one Tamil and one Telugu. To Samoa last year a grant of 1,100 Samoan Bibles was sent out to the L.M.S mission.

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Concerning this version Robert Louis Stevenson wrote : "Take our Bible here in Samoa. It is not only a monument of excellent literature, but a desirable piece of typography. I would gladly pay as high for as good an edition of its English sister, if one existed." But in addition to these books, a supply of Chinese Scriptures has also been sent out to Samoa for distribution among the 1,300 Chinese coolies from Shanghai and Canton, who are working on cocoa and rubber plantations in the islands of Upolu and Saraii. To Fiji, 7,500 Fijian Bibles and Testaments were sent out early in 1908. A recent issue of the *Mission Field* described the numerous Indian coolies who find their way to the sugar plantations on those islands. On one plantation Gospels were sold in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu ; then men who spoke Kanarese and Malayalam enquired if no books had been brought for them, Panjabis asked for something in Gurmukhi, and Marathis were also met with. The latest census shows that, whilst native Fijians who have been evangelized by the splendid work of the Methodist missionaries are growing fewer, these heathen coolies from India are increasing alike by birth-rate and by fresh immigration.

In the West Indies, Scriptures in their own languages are supplied to the Chinese and Syrian settlers in Jamaica and to negro labourers on the banana plantations in Guatemala. In British Guiana there are over 100,000 East Indian coolies, most of them from North India, for whom our Society sends out Hindi Gospels and Testaments.

In South America.

Already there is a wonderful mingling of races in South America, "the Continent of opportunity." Besides

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negroes and numerous tribes of aboriginal Indians, millions of immigrants arrive from Europe, while Asiatics can enter freely, and a colony of Japanese is being settled close to Rio. A Brazilian colporteur in the State of Santa Catarina came upon a German colony at Joinville, "a nice, quiet, and scrupulously clean town. It sounds very odd to hear the black people speaking German. German beer, German sausages, and German customs are everywhere. I sold German Scriptures easily—more than £1 worth in a day. If I had had twenty more Bibles I could have sold them all." Argentina last year received more than a quarter of a million fresh immigrants, of whom 107,000 were Spaniards and 79,000 Italians, besides men of thirty-four other nationalities. In Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay our colporteurs sold the Scriptures in the following eighteen versions : Spanish, Italian, French, German, Arabic, Hebrew, Polish, Croat, Servian, Greek, Portuguese, Hungarian, English, Rumanian, Basque, Bohemian, Quechua, and Aimara.

At Port Said.

At the great sea-ports of the world sailors and passengers of all nations meet and mingle on the quays. A typical example of the Bible Society's work is found at Port Said, the gateway between the east and the west, where more than a million visitors, passengers, soldiers and seamen call every year. Our colporteurs are constantly visiting the steamers and transports which stay at Port Said, as a rule, for only a few hours ; no other regular Christian agents take advantage of the opportunity thus presented. Last year the Scriptures were sold in Port Said in thirty-five different languages, a witness to the polyglot character of the human freight

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which passes through the Suez Canal. Here are some experiences of colportage :

“I went on board an Austrian warship, whose crew were greatly surprised when I offered them books in their various tongues. Very quickly I disposed of all my Croatian books, and sold copies as well in Italian, Bohemian and Servian. They asked me questions about the Society, which I was glad to answer . . . On board a Russian steamer I found a large number of pilgrims bound for Jerusalem, most of them advanced in life. That afternoon I could not sell a copy, owing to the disfavour of a Russian priest on board. Next morning I returned, and the priest asked me about our Society; so I took him ashore and showed him the dépôt at Port Said. Afterwards he invited me back with my books and recommended the pilgrims to buy, and in a very short time I sold more than fifty copies.”

In the Holy City.

At Jerusalem itself the Bible Society maintains a dépôt, which becomes more frequented and more useful year by year. During 1908, 5,600 books were sold there in twenty-seven languages and dialects. Greek, Armenian and Roman priests and monks visited the dépôt to buy the Scriptures, and the Armenian convent purchased a number of copies for the use of its inmates. Every Easter cosmopolitan companies of pilgrims make their way to Jerusalem, where about 20,000 strangers gather from far and near to keep the festival. The pilgrims are for the most part Russians, Armenians, Bulgarians, Greeks and Abyssinians, the majority of them being very poor. At Easter, 1908, a special attempt was made to reach these foreigners, who spend most of their time lingering about the various churches and shrines. Colporteur Segal who can converse in twelve languages, was sent from Port Said to undertake the enterprise.

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For five weeks he went in and out among the pilgrims, who seemed to attach a special value to the Holy Books which they purchased in the Holy City. The colporteur writes :

“During my stay in Jerusalem I sold the Scriptures regularly in a street near the Russian church, where many of the pilgrims lodge and through which they pass by hundreds every day. I was sitting there with my books before me when some pilgrims came up and said : ‘ Though we do not know how to read, yet we wish to buy some of your books for our children at home. But first we want to be certain that they are the real Scriptures.’ For some time they hesitated doubtfully, until a Russian priest came by and bought a New Testament for himself ; at once the others followed his example, and I sold forty copies that afternoon. Another day a pilgrim took up a Testament, saying : ‘ I should very much like to buy this holy book ; what does it cost ? ’ I answered : ‘ The Bible Society sells the book at less than its cost price, so that the poorest pilgrims can obtain the Scriptures for themselves.’ He expressed his gratitude to the Society and paid for the book. Afterwards some of his friends came to buy for themselves, and one Russian asked me : ‘ Whence does your Society bring such books ? ’ I replied, ‘ From your Russian Fatherland. We bring them here for you pilgrims.’ ‘ Indeed this is a noble Society, and I shall pray much for it and its work.’ ”

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MESSENGERS OF THE WORD.

“Mankind may have a thousand tongues but it has only one heart, and that heart understands one language the whole world over—the language of Divine Love.”

The Bible Society employs one characteristic set of agents, who carry God's Book from door to door and pass it from hand to hand. No method of circulating the Scriptures is more intimate and more effectual. All the year round these colporteurs, as we call them, who are drawn from many races, tramp along the foot-paths of many lands. As a rule they are natives of the country in which they labour, and so their common talk is racy of the soil. They are at home among the folk to whom they offer their cheap little Testaments and Gospels at prices which even peasants and coolies can afford to pay. They belong to various communions of Christ's Church; but at least they can always bear simple, heart-felt testimony to the power of the Word which they distribute, and their experiences are as variegated as their dress and their speech.

The Bible-seller's duty is no holiday task. He is exposed to all extremes of climate, and often runs considerable risks from popular prejudices and religious rancour. No one would embrace such a calling except in a missionary spirit: the wages are too meagre, the hardships and hazards are too real. Last year our col-

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porteurs were arrested as spies in Nicaragua, robbed and reviled in Burma, bitterly mocked by social democrats in Germany, knocked down in Bosnia, driven out of villages in Peru by priests who burned their books, stoned in remote corners of the Philippines, beaten by Moslems in Baluchistan, forced to hide among the woods in Brazil. From the awful earthquake at Messina a colporteur with his wife and children escaped—bruised, wounded, half-naked, penniless, but saved.

Yet in spite of solitude and hardship and danger, these wayfaring men find compensations and encouragements of their own. Here is a Bible-seller in the far east of Siberia who has entered some large military barracks on the river Amur, armed with a permit from the Russian governor and an open letter of commendation from the Russian bishop. As he crosses the barrack-yard, a general notices his knapsack and calls to the soldiers: "Little brothers, come and look at these good books; they are cheap and profitable for one's soul."

And here is a Bulgarian colporteur at the Rustchuk railway-station, accosted by a Bulgarian priest who says: "My son, you have a blessed lot in being privileged to distribute this Word of Life." Then turning to the people who stand by, the priest continues: "Every household which does not possess this book and read it every day, is not worthy to be called a Christian household." One of the chief railway officials took up the priest's testimony: "Yes, I used to think the Bible was only good for ancient times; but since I began to read it, I have found in it the greatest help and comfort a man can have."

And we think kindly of that apothecary among the Transylvanian mountains who spoke like a friend to

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Colporteur Freska and called him 'colleague'; for he—the apothecary—was engaged in selling that which cured men's sick bodies, and his 'colleague' was engaged in bringing them that which was balsam for their sick souls.

* * *

It would be a fascinating journey, if we could trace the footsteps of these pilgrims, who carry the Gospel in their wallets and its great watchword on their lips, along the highways and byways of the world. We should follow them across the bleak plains of Mongolia, and through the apple-orchards of Tasmania, and over the sultry mountain-ridges of Spain. We should penetrate remote corners of Europe where no other evangelist ever comes, and the Bible is a book unknown. We should lodge with gold-miners on the Orinoco and lumber-men on the St. Lawrence, and tramp through pale-green rice fields in Bengal, and watch the stars reflected in the inland sea of Japan. The succeeding paragraphs will supply some glimpses of the experiences encountered by the Bible Society's nine hundred colporteurs in their wanderings during the last twelve months.

A Crimean Veteran.

"I know some one who is sure to buy from you," said a lady to Colporteur Saix. An old Frenchman soon came upon the scene, and Saix showed him a New Testament. He looked at it, and ejaculated "*C'est bien ça!*" Then he told how in the Crimean campaign a comrade of his was wounded beneath the walls of Sebastopol. As the wounded man lay dying, he begged that someone would read to him out of the book he kept in his cloak. "I read to him till he breathed his last," said the old soldier, "and then kept the book for myself,



ON A RIVER IN SUMATRA.

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for it contained a story of a Shepherd and sheep which interested me. Afterwards I was severely wounded myself and lay unconscious many days. When I recovered, my little book had disappeared, and no one could give me news of it. I regretted it so much, and kept thinking of it constantly. I have often related the incident to my neighbours, and that is why this lady, after she had opened the book at a passage about that Shepherd, called me, *et c'est bien ça!* I am glad you came, for I did not know where to get hold of that book and did not even know whether it was still being printed."

At Wiesbaden.

At the Andreas fair held outside Wiesbaden, Colporteur Dreher visited the vagrant traders, who wander all over the country with their booths, a queer, nomadic, half-vagabond race, and not infrequently they bought Bibles or Testaments. When throngs of visitors arrived at the fair from Wiesbaden, Dreher took up a good position behind a table on which he spread out his editions, while a huge placard announced that he had books "for Protestants, Catholics, and Jews." Notwithstanding any amount of chaff, he sold during the first three days of the fair 700 volumes, and during the following week 500. On some days he was at work from 7 a.m. till 1 o'clock next morning. Dreher gives an amusing account of how he met some strolling players erecting a "merry-go-round." "What have you got that is new?" they called out. And when he replied, "The saving Gospel of Jesus Christ," they stared at him in perplexity, but some of them bought copies.

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In Barracks.

At Budapest, Colporteur Tatter did good work in the barracks, and obtained from one colonel a special permit to work among his regiment ; in consequence of this unusual favour he was able to sell a large number of New Testaments to the men. In another barracks the following scene took place :—

“One of the senior lieutenants told me in a friendly way that as he himself possessed a Bible he would gladly help me in my work. Thereupon he ordered the regimental trumpeters to sound their trumpets, and forthwith the corporals came running to the spot from all quarters. They received orders to permit me to work among the men unhampered. So I set out accompanied by the corporals, who called into each room, ‘Buy these books, they are good.’ Some of the corporals even went with me into the rooms and encouraged the soldiers to purchase. I paid four visits to these barracks, and sold over 200 New Testaments and several Bibles, most of them to Roman Catholics.”

Towards the close of last year we engaged a fresh Russian colporteur, a member of the Orthodox Church, to circulate the Scriptures among Russians in Poland. He also was able to get a permit to visit the military barracks, the strict rule being now sometimes relaxed in favour of time-expired soldiers of unblemished character. For six weeks this man was busy among the troops in garrison at Warsaw, and sold 350 books.

In the German Black Country.

For dense and varied population, and for the high average of intelligence among the people, who are mainly engaged in manufactures and mining, the Rhineland and Westphalia have peculiar importance. Among these eager millions, social democracy and agnosticism find their ablest recruits. We must recollect

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that on the Continent of Europe the name 'socialism' implies much more than an economic system ; it commonly involves as well a materialist creed which denies the very existence of God. With the busy manufacturing city of Essen for his headquarters, Colporteur Rogowski sold last year no fewer than 8,500 copies, of which 3,600 were Bibles. As many as 32,000 men are employed in Krupp's great cannon and steel works, where hundreds of chimneys pour forth their murky smoke while steam and coal-dust have painted the houses black. Here a colporteur has, indeed, a difficult task. At Essen, the social democrats are his worst enemies. They deny every article of Christian faith and scoff at all things sacred. The colporteur is greeted by: "You idiot! Do you really believe that swindle? Fancy a man carrying round such books!" One social democrat, who bought a New Testament, added, "When I have read it, I shall burn it. I only want to see what it is like."

Among Social Democrats.

With the remarkable growth of Berlin in population and in manufactures—it is now, with its suburbs, a city of three millions—a large foreign contingent of Poles, Slovaks and Italians has been attracted there. In Berlin our colporteurs find that a majority of the working men whom they meet are estranged from Christianity and hold the socialist creed, with its dreadful negative of things unseen and eternal. One colporteur gained permission to visit a factory ; but any men desirous of buying the Scriptures were overwhelmed with ridicule by their fellows, and treated as persons of weak intellect, until under such bitter mockery they turned away.

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Among the factory-workers and miners in Galicia, Colporteur Pawelek's work was made difficult by the opposition of the social democrats, who are rapidly becoming as great a power in Austria as they are in Germany. They label the Bible, "the black priests' book."

In Styria, Colporteur Köck reports that the Bible has two sets of enemies—the socialists and the priests; these mutual foes join hands in their warfare against God's Book. Köck suffered actual violence from the socialists. He spoke to them about the Crucified Saviour, and was told that to-day it is the worker who is crucified. In Styria, again, one member of the Reichsrath, who was also a Roman priest, had incited the press against Colporteur Kaisersberger, and matters went so far that our agent was hardly able to find a lodging. Through an autumn night he had to wander about till dawn, no one consenting to give him shelter. Even food was often refused him, and in one district he had to carry bread about in his pocket.

From Bosnia, Colporteur Stehly sends ample testimony to the difficulties of that field. In a wild highland district the people only laughed and mocked at him. At one town he could not even procure a lodging, and had to make for another, where there is a factory employing eight hundred hands; but he found that they were mostly social democrats, who received him with "blows and hustling."

Strange Superstitions.

In out-of-the-world corners the Bible-seller comes across many curious examples of superstition. A French countrywoman in Mayenne asked quite seriously, "Our cow is ill; if I buy your book, will it stop her from

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dying?" A good wife in Croatia was anxious to know whether she ought to pray to the Virgin and St. Anthony of Padua. Colporteur Hertelendy replied that according to the Bible she should pray to God alone. She was on her way to church to buy candles and light them before her favourite shrines; but when she heard what Hertelendy had to say about the Bible, she reconsidered the matter. "I'll buy a Bible," she said shrewdly, "for that lasts: the candles will only burn out."

Let the Bible do its Work.

From the Gironde, Colporteur Rousseau sends this picture:—"Passing on my bicycle through a village where I had been busy two days before, I saw five or six people sitting under a shed, listening to a boy of twelve as he read aloud from a New Testament which I had sold. Though I was greeted in a very sympathetic manner, I did not stop or interrupt the reading, leaving the Word of God to touch their hearts." This colporteur has grasped the spirit and aim of our Society—to let the Bible do its own work.

"I am an anarchist," said a Frenchman, near Dunkirk, "Indeed," said Colporteur Vanhoucke: "but Christ died for anarchists also." "Ah!" said the other, looking closely at him, "you are right"—and he bought a Gospel. Another French colporteur came into the orchard where a husband and wife were gathering apples. "You see I have no time," said the husband, who was up in a tree; and his wife chimed in, "I am busy too, holding the ladder. My husband cannot come down, even for the Gospel"; "Yes," answered the colporteur, "but Jesus Christ *made* time to come down from heaven. He descended for your sakes, out of pure love. It is well worth coming down from your apple tree to procure the

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book I offer." "Well," said the woman, who had grown serious, "come down, husband." Then they bought a New Testament and promised to read it.

At a Hungarian farm Colporteur Holik met three men, two of whom bought Bibles ; but the third farmer had no money in his pocket, so he invited the colporteur to his home. Along the road their talk turned on the Fall and the part which Eve took in leading her husband astray. "Adam," said the man, "was undoubtedly wrong in listening to Eve." But when they reached the house, this farmer's wife would not hear of her husband spending his money on a Bible. "No, no," said the husband to his wife, "I am not going to fall into Adam's sin and listen to you." So he paid for the Bible.

At Rostoff Railway-station.

The railway-station of Rostoff, on the Don, is a busy place, forming the junction of the Caucasian railways with those of Russia proper. Here, last year, our colporteur sold 3,290 books. Among the purchasers are wealthy people on their way to the health-resorts of the Caucasus, while in the harvesting season there is a great movement of labourers to and fro through Rostoff. As the train-times are arranged, the colporteur has to attend very early in the mornings and very late in the evenings. In July, the temperature by the station thermometer rose to 35° Réaumur, or 110° Fahrenheit. In that oppressive heat the colporteur went along and through the trains, carrying his load of books and trying to persuade the perspiring passengers to buy the Scriptures.

Down a River in Northern Russia.

Every summer one of our Russian colporteurs goes on a Bible-selling tour in the province of Archangel,

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which stretches across Northern Russia. Although this province is half as large again as France, yet the people spread over its huge area are fewer than the population of such a town as Sheffield. Colporteur Maslennikoff must make long tiring journeys in order to sell Testaments and Gospels among these widely scattered folk. Sometimes he travels by train, sometimes he drives about in a cart, or passes up and down the rivers in a passenger steamer.

In the autumn of 1908 Maslennikoff paid his first visit to London, although he does not know a word of English. He is a short, thick-set man, who looks as though his life in the open air has made him as hard as nails, and his broad smiling face is tanned a deep ruddy brown by wind and sun and rain. He came fresh from a tour in Northern Russia, of which he gave an account with the assistance of an interpreter. His summer expedition must for the most part be along the waterways—down the Northern Dvina and one or other of its many tributaries. And for some years past it has been made in an open boat, in order to reach the smaller places which are not touched at by the river-steamers. The tributary chosen this last year was the Vychegda, and the starting point Ustsysolsk. The name of Maslennikoff's boat *Colporteur* was painted on her side in Russ characters, and a Russian flag, with "Bible Society" inscribed across it, floated from the stern.

During his long voyage of 730 miles, which took six weeks to accomplish, he visited forty towns and villages along the rivers Vychegda and North Dvina before he reached his destination, the town of Archangel, on the White Sea. Many of these places were too small for a steamer to call at, and had no wharves. As

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the colporteur's boat drew near a village the people would run down to the bank to see what the curious little craft with its flag meant. They had never heard of a Bible-boat before. Sometimes Maslennikoff made some sales among the passengers on steamers plying up and down the river, which he could often approach when they were moored at the wharves. He had many friendly talks with the men employed in steering the timber-rafts which drift down the stream with the current. These men lead hard lives, spending day and night on their rafts, with no shelter between them and the open sky, exposed to the full force of wind and rain. Their food is black bread and potatoes, and they earn such low wages that they are too poor to buy even the cheap Gospels in the colporteur's stock. On this voyage Colporteur Maslennikoff sold from his boat altogether 2,885 copies of the Scriptures, and 286 copies he also gave away.

By Sledge in Siberia.

Our Agency owns a sledge and harness at Cheljabinsk, and purchases a horse regularly each winter, selling it again later in the season. Immediately after the Russian New Year a horse was bought, and two colporteurs started on a long tour in the north of the Orenburg and Ufa Provinces. The distance to Troitzk is about 100 miles, and there are but few villages on the road they took over the bare snowy steppe. They came upon a hamlet with about ten huts, mostly built of turf and earth. It turned out to be a new settlement of Molokani (lit. 'milk-drinkers')—a sect that abstain from strong liquors, and resemble what in England we know as 'Bible Christians.' These Molokani wished to summon a meeting, but Michailoff told them that he

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must push on over the steppe, where many of their brethren also wanted the Scriptures. He sold, however, in that small hamlet, 7.50 *roubles* (15s.) worth of books.

In Eastern Lands.

Among the teeming millions of the East, one chief problem for our Society is the problem of distribution. The Bible has been translated and printed in all the principal languages. We can publish large editions. But how shall the books be distributed in numbers sufficient to reach all who are ready to take and read? God has left this to human agency. The Scriptures must be carried by Christian hands into the countless towns, villages, and hamlets where these multitudes live and die. Thus it comes to pass that more than half of the Bible Society's colporteurs are brown men in India, or yellow men in China.

In India, last year, our native Christian colporteurs were able to dispose of 230,000 copies of God's Word. These books were mostly Gospels in the various vernaculars, which are sold for a farthing a-piece. The colporteurs are stationed at points where they are likely to meet large numbers of their fellow-countrymen who have never heard the story of God's love in Christ, nor seen the book which contains it. With a hearty word of commendation on the part of the seller, these tens of thousands of Gospels have gone on their errands of mercy throughout the length and breadth of the land.

In South India.

The colporteur is ubiquitous, his opportunity limitless, his task unique. In South India there is hardly a spot where you may not find him in the course of his wanderings. It may be that, like the vendor of fruits and sweetmeats, he will come up to the window of your

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railway-carriage and offer you his wares—a Bible, a Testament, or Gospel in any language spoken in the district. It may be in a Hindu home, or tramping a country road, or passing in and out among the crowds that throng a weekly market, that you will see the man with the satchel trying to interest his fellow-countrymen in the Christian books and inducing them to buy and read copies for themselves. Thus the cheap little Testaments and Gospels are carried far and near and offered to wayfarers by the road-side, to dwellers in country villages, as well as among the crowds outside the temples at heathen festivals, or on the river-bank and sea-beach where pilgrims gather for sacred bathing.

Sometimes the colporteur is received with rabid abuse, or threatened with violence by mobs shouting *Bande Mataram!* One man was beaten by soldiers of the Nizam, and his books were confiscated. Another had his personal property stolen while he slept. Several more report insult and ill-treatment as a common occurrence, especially in these days of antipathy to everything British. Famine and pestilence, moreover, stand in the way of their work. “Instead of asking us to pay half an *anna* for a book,” remarked a villager plaintively, “why don’t you *give* us half an *anna* to buy food and medicine?” At other places, however, the colporteurs are welcomed in friendly fashion. A village schoolmaster, here and there, will recommend his boys to buy farthing Gospels. Near Kottayam, the colporteur found revival services being carried on among the Syrian Christians, during which there was a good demand for the Scriptures. We hear of a heathen festival where, one evening, seventy books were sold among the crowd.

Curious objections proceed from men of many castes and races. Journeying by boat, a colporteur’s fellow



Photo by A. P. Esquivas.

THE ANNUAL BUDDHIST PROCESSION AT KANDY, CEYLON.

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passengers, who were farmers, asked him if it were not a sin to leave your own father and to call another father; likewise, was it not a sin to abandon your father's religion, customs, and manners? In reply, he said: "In olden times your fathers travelled by bullock-carts, and yet you do not scruple to take advantage of railways and telegraphs. So in former days people knew little about Christianity, but now it is commonly known and many acknowledge its excellence."

Christ or Krishna.

Again, we read how a mining agent, a Brahman by caste, took the colporteur to his house where some *Sri Vaishnavas* were seated, to converse with them about religion. They said: "Christ and Krishna are one and the same. When Christ was born, shepherds visited Him first; and similarly Krishna was born in the house of a shepherd." The colporteur adds: "I disabused their minds by showing them the difference between the character of Christ and the character of Krishna."

In the Jungles of Malabar.

In the course of an autumn tour among the jungles at the foot of the Western Ghats in Malabar, the colporteur went from hut to hut proclaiming the story of Divine Love. Some of the more ignorant people were afraid and hid themselves, or fled. Others, who are practically slaves to rich Muhammadans or Sudras, had never handled money. Most of them heard the Word of God willingly, however, and such as had been taught to read offered cocoa-nuts and areca-nuts in exchange for copies of the Gospel.

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Farmers in the Transvaal.

Among the Dutch farmers our colporteur sold last year 1,297 Bibles, 202 Testaments, and 24 Psalters. He visited twenty scattered districts of the Transvaal, and travelled with his mules and wagon over 3,000 miles. General De la Rey, who will be remembered as one of the most fearless Boer leaders during the late war, showed friendly practical interest in this colporteur's work at Hartebeestfontein. In order to exhibit the Bibles more effectively, the General brought his own wagon close to the colporteur's, stretched a sail over the two, and assisted in producing a better display. On this occasion the colporteur was astonished at the number of the books sold.

By torch-light in Annam.

Here is a torch-light scene at a river-side village in Annam, where our Sub-agent, M. Bonnet, obtained leave to assemble the people. A stalwart boy beat the gong for the common crowd, and another lad went to call the notables. When the meeting was over and 100 copies of the Scriptures had been sold, darkness began to set in. A *sampan* (native boat) was wanted to reach Ngo-Xo. The villagers went to find one, and then brought torches to escort M. Bonnet and his two native helpers down to the water's edge, where the flaring lights cast red reflections in the stream. 'We received you in a poor house,' said the headman, 'but come again and spend a few days with us. We will welcome you better.'

At a Buddhist Monastery in Cambodia.

In Kompong-Chnang, fifty miles from Pnom-Penh, M. Bonnet was very well received by the superior of a *Bonze* monastery, to whom he applied for hospitality.



Photo by T. D. Kacenscroft.

A TEAM IN CAPE COLONY.

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The superior immediately had M. Bonnet's packages carried to his cottage, and offered him tea. Our Sub-agent at once produced his books. The *Bonze*, after carefully examining a volume and handling it in every possible manner, opened it, and seeing it was written in Cambodian, began to read it aloud, by the dim light of a dilapidated lamp, with many tokens of joy. The other *Bonzes* and a few Cambodians sitting on the floor, listened to him intently. The old man read for an hour, and when he was tired he passed the book to a younger man, who with a firmer voice continued to read for all to hear. There were eighty *Bonzes* in that monastery, and almost every one bought a book.

In China.

During the year 1908 more than a million and a quarter copies of the Scriptures were sold by colportage in China. Across the eighteen provinces of the Flowery Land our Society maintains a company of four hundred Bible-sellers—all of them Chinese Christians. Most of these men work under the supervision of missionaries belonging to the various Christian Churches that are engaged in spreading the Gospel in the Chinese Empire. The ministry of the colporteur is humble in appearance, but none the less far reaching in its results. A missionary at Kaifengfu, Honan, sends this significant testimony: "From an evangelistic point of view the work they accomplish is admirable. *How few comparatively would hear the Gospel, were it not for the colporteurs.*"

Autolycus the Evangelist.

In China, the colporteur is a man with a message quite as much as a man with a book. Many of these men have

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the gift of ready speech. Their knowledge is often limited, and sometimes sadly deficient: but what they know, they gladly and boldly tell. No one who has accompanied a colporteur on a journey and heard him pour forth some story from the Old or the New Testament, or preach the message of repentance and salvation to a group of villagers, can question his value as a herald of the Gospel. It is true that his speech is generally crude and colloquial, and that he may refer to Bible characters as though they were personages in contemporary Chinese history; but the stories lose none of their charm. Even in Chinese dress they preserve a matchless interest and freshness, and it is not surprising that 'unlearned and ignorant' men want to get the book in which they can read the stories for themselves. Naturally, the colporteur comes to be looked upon as a representative of the 'Jesus Church,' or a teacher of the 'foreign' religion; and it is also natural that he should become the guide and helper of many who wish to learn more of the 'doctrine,' or to join the Church. In no way, indeed, does the Society's partnership with missions become more effective than through its colporteurs.

A Colporteur's Journal.

What manner of men are these Chinese colporteurs, whose wages amount to from £12 to £16 a year? The best answer will be to give some extracts translated from the journals of two men who were employed by our Society last year in the Province of Kansu. Colporteur Kao Ki-cheng writes:—

"In February I was at a place called Kinchuanpu, where I could get no one to take me in, so I went to a temple, where the priest allowed me to stay; the priest himself could not read. When the people came to burn incense, I

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preached the Word to them, until the priest owned that the doctrine was good, but said, 'If all believed that, what would we priests eat?' Another night I arrived at a place about dusk; it was raining fast, but no one would take me in. I asked a farmer if I might sleep in his doorway, but he even objected to that. An old man coming by, said, 'This is a seller of good books; if they won't let you sleep in the doorway, come to my house.' The old man got a meal for me; then went and invited all his neighbours in, and they listened well to the explaining of the Book.

"During November, I was in the P'ingfan district, and at one place the Superintendent of the Tax Office opposed me. I turned on him and said, 'You accuse me of serving foreigners, but does your honour know where all this wool goes to on which you collect taxes? It goes to foreign countries. I am not serving foreigners, but God, whom the foreigners came to tell us about.' I then explained the contents of the books I sold, and kept at it until dark. The official became friendly, and invited me to stay with him; but a relative came in who would not hear of my remaining. 'All right,' I said, 'my Heavenly Father knows,' and I left. Going through the yard, I saw a small house, and asked if I might stay there. I was told it was a pig-sty. 'Never mind,' I said; so I stayed there and slept in the straw with the pigs and dogs, and had a warm night! Next morning I sold about 200 *cash* worth of books."

"I, too, must do something."

Tsin Tien-ling, the second of these colporteurs, writes with a similar directness and simplicity:—

'When the pastor asked me to take up colportage work and so help the people to get a knowledge of the Lord Jesus, I felt very unwilling. I knew from Kao that the work was terribly hard—walking, walking all the month, and perhaps not selling many books; so I declined, but I could see the pastor wanted me to go. One day, after his telling us how Jesus had left heaven and all its joys, coming into this world

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to endure untold shame and bitterness that we might go to heaven, I felt that I, too, must do something to tell the people of His love, so I said that I was willing to go. The pastor soon set me up with the different kinds of books, and I started off. . . In the seventh moon, I went to the north-west of Liangchow. In some places the people bought freely, but in others they all pleaded that they could not read. Then I sat down and read to them, especially that wonderful first chapter of St. Matthew, where it tells the genealogy of Jesus, which goes back to our Chinese Hsia dynasty. In Tatsing and Tumentsi the people were very hard to reach. I sold very few books, and the scorn and ridicule were very hard to bear. When I returned, the pastor told me how others had suffered to make Jesus known, and also read to me words of encouragement out of God's Book; and at our week-night meeting, when I told the brethren my experiences, as is our custom, they all prayed the Lord to give me courage and patience, which I am sure He will."

Helping the Hwa Miao.

Missionaries of the United Methodist Mission and of the China Inland Mission have been the leaders in the wonderful work recently done amongst the Hwa Miao, in the great Province of Yunnan. Thousands of these aborigines have been baptized already. Naturally the need of a translation of the Scriptures was at once felt; and naturally also, as soon as the Hwa Miao language had been reduced to written form and a single Gospel translated, the Bible Society was called into partnership, and two Gospels, translated by the Rev. S. Pollard and Pastor Li, have been printed and published.

"We want Books in our own Tongue."

"A Miao reads his book, takes it on a journey, carries it in his bosom, or in his rug. . . . The Gospel, indeed, will be a companion, and it needs to be printed in a durable form. In my district there are Nosu, Laka, Lisu, Peh Miao, Pai Ih,

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and Mantze. We hope that all these tribes will fall into line—if so, all will be clamouring for their own Gospels. The Chinese books are all very well for a while, but “we want our own” is the cry. . . . The Miao script is simple and easily learnt. . . .

“The arrival of the Gospel of St. Mark in Hwa Miao was hailed with great satisfaction by the people, and in a very little while the first load of 800 books was disposed of. Since then, as fast as the books came the people have bought them, and some are still needing copies. It is a great delight to the Hwa Miao to get their own books. Very many can now read the Gospel through, and in numbers of villages the book is read at evening prayers. A good number of Chinese Gospels have also been sold. . . . We are very glad of the help rendered by the Bible Society, and hope soon to give you more work to do in printing for other tribes.”

Space fails us to describe the explorations of Mr. Fergusson, the Society’s Sub-agent in Szechwan, through the borderland between China and Tibet. His new map of the country occupied by the “Eighteen Tribes,” has found a place in the *Journal* of the Royal Geographical Society. Another Sub-agent, Mr. Amundsen, had unprecedented success on the frontier of Yunnan.

“At the tin-mines west of Mengtze I had an excited crowd which became so great that the trader, by whose shop I was standing, began to throw my books into the street in order to get me away from his premises. The crowd followed me to the inn, where I actually had to shut the doors in order to keep them out of my room. We sold altogether on this journey between 14,000 and 15,000 books—not a bad result in the backwoods of China.”

Under Mongolian Tents.

Mr. F. A. Larson, a stalwart, long-limbed, fair-haired Swede, has spent sixteen years in Mongolia, and probably no other foreigner understands the language

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or the people so thoroughly. He travels among these nomads with a caravan of camels and ponies, which are the property of the Bible Society. A good camel costs £10, and will carry a load of 400 lbs. Mr. Larson recently returned from a journey which lasted sixteen months over the wind-swept Mongolian plains, during which he put into the hands of the people 12,300 Gospels in Mongol and Tibetan.

“All the Lamas in Mongolia can read, and they form nearly one-third of the population. As a rule they read not Mongolian but Tibetan, for the purpose of reciting their Buddhist liturgies and formulas in a quite mechanical way, without at all understanding what the words mean. Only the chief lamas and more educated men really understand. Very few ordinary Mongols can read their own language; but when a Mongol does know how to read he often sets up a private school, and for a small fee parents encamped anywhere in the neighbourhood can send their children to him to learn reading and writing. The teacher's fee for each child may be one or two sheep for six months, or perhaps a pony for a year. These teachers, however, have no Mongolian school-books, and I specially endeavour to circulate the Gospels among them and their pupils. Our Mongolian Gospels form the only primers—in fact the only printed books accessible for these Mongolian schools.”

In Japan.

Last year the Japanese colporteurs sold a quarter-of-a-million volumes. Here is a vignette of one of them, Mr. Kawakami, who, with the help of an assistant, disposed of the record number of 680 books in a single day. Under ordinary circumstances this would be impossible, but he happened to attend a festival where people gathered round him, attracted by the lively strains of his violin. They showed themselves so eager to buy that he soon found that nothing more was needed

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than for him to hand out the books and take the money in return. Presently his pocket became so heavy with coppers that the seams gave way, and out rolled the coins on to the ground—much to the amusement of the crowd and of the colporteur, for whom it was rather a good advertisement. Mr. Kawakami's sales last year exceeded 34,000 copies.

In South America.

Early in 1909, the newspapers recorded an unprecedented voyage by the British cruiser, *Pelorus*, which steamed up the Amazon for 2,300 miles, right through the heart of South America, crossing the frontier between Brazil and Peru and penetrating to Iquitos, less than 500 miles from the Pacific coast. Such an expedition illustrates how our Bible-sellers make their way into the fastnesses of a continent, and carry God's Word up tangled water-ways and through virgin forests to people whom every other Christian agency forgets. Last year, for example, the Society's colporteurs crossed some of the highest passes of the Andes, visited the nitrate pampas of Chile, and sold 20,000 copies of the Scriptures at Rio railway station.

On the Shore of Lake Titicaca.

On the shore of this wonderful mountain-sea, which lies in the clouds two miles and a half above the level of the Pacific, stands the town of Puno, whose mixed population is composed of Spanish-speaking folk and Aimara and Quechua Indians. Here Colporteur Litardo met an Indian schoolmaster, who knew something of the Gospel, having obtained one of our Aimara Gospels, and was anxious to obtain some copies for his boys. His little school for Spanish-speaking boys and Indians is poorly equipped compared with English schools ; but Litardo found the master a warm friend of the Bible.

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For British Colonists.

Nor are our own kith and kin forgotten, who make fresh homes in Greater Britain beyond the seas. The colporteur, with his Bible-cart, carries the Book of books to scattered farmers in Natal, and calls at many an isolated settlement in New South Wales and Queensland, amid the soft grey-green foliage of the bush—seeking in the loneliest and dreariest places to supply some means of grace and to kindle some hope of glory.

* * *

At the Society's annual meeting, in 1908, an appeal was made for new colporteurs in the Far East, and it was suggested that friends might make themselves individually responsible for the support of one or more colporteurs in China. To this appeal, taken up and repeated in many quarters, there has been a most encouraging response. As a result, we are thankful to announce that 122 new colporteurs are now being thus supported in China, Korea and Japan.

Towards the end of 1908 our Committee made a careful survey of the Society's operations, to determine how far colportage might be wisely extended. They decided to authorize a number of new colporteurs in different countries, which will involve an additional expenditure of over £3,000 a year. Even during the past twelve months the number of our colporteurs has increased in certain countries, and their work, as a whole, has proved signally successful. The Society's total sales by colportage last year reached the unprecedented total of over 2,600,000 books—over 300,000 more than the figures given for 1907.

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WITH SIGNS FOLLOWING.

“ He that has lost his God can find Him again in this Book, and towards him who has never known Him it wafts the breath of the Divine Word.”

HEINE.

The legends of many races tell us of magical books by virtue of which wizards could work enchantments, and of mysterious and awful words whose very syllables held superhuman power. Behind such stories we may perhaps recognize some dim sense of the mystery of language and the strange spell of written words. In Rhodesia a Mashona youth had been working at Salisbury, where he was taught to read; and when he went back to his heathen *kraal* he took home with him a copy of St. Mark's Gospel in Shona. By way of exhibiting his wisdom he began to read it to a company of his friends. Word by word, sentence by sentence, he spelt it out, to the amazement of the listeners. “What is this?” they cried, “this thing telling us all sorts of news in our own tongue? What can it mean? Sorcery! Made by white men! What prodigies these are!”

To primitive man, however, not merely words and books appeared miraculous; to his eyes all material things seemed possessed by mysterious presences which could work him harm. Everywhere he was haunted by the dread of jealous powers which compassed his path and his lying down, and watched him with envious or

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hostile purpose. Life became one long anxiety, as he strove to guard himself against their influence and, if it might be, to propitiate their wrath. Here is a vivid picture of the fears which still hold sway over two-thirds of mankind—a picture drawn not by any Christian missionary but by a scientific anthropologist.

“The power in the stone, the filmy soul lurking in all things visible, the mysterious human bond of totem in emu or fish, the guardian angel in a greasy rag, the living or even imaginary frog that, hoisted on a pole, will awe a countryside—certainly these show diversity enough, no matter to what primitive stage of man you turn. The Zulu, who doubts of God, likes to have the snake of his father’s soul curled upon his roof. Foxes, bears, and trees find worshippers; toys are dowered with mortality, and Juggernath is put to bed. The Chibokwe woman spreads meal before her wooden bird in hope that her childbirth may be eased; her husband stripes a toy canoe with red and black to please the fishing spirit. Powers of evil must have their due; the goddess of Indian cholera receives her offering, and the small-pox image her coat of vermilion daub. For luck or vengeance the Congo man drives nails as thick as quills upon a porcupine into his wooden god; lovers thrust pins into inhuman hearts, and Sister Helen melts her waxen man. Medicine men cry aloud for rain, and snuff crime upon the air as a dog smells blood. All night dark forms are now dancing in the moon, while the drum throbs to ecstasy, and antelope skulls glimmer upon their circle of sticks. Every morning in a million households Shiva, beside his patient bull, receives the offering of water, rice, and a green leaf or two. Vishnu’s footprint is painted anew upon the forehead of his own; the schoolboy prays to the elephant god for wisdom in his examination; and Kali, dumbfounded at her husband’s sacrifice, mercifully checks her carnage. In China the praying-wheels are spinning round, the burning prayers ascend to the sky, mingling their smoke with burning gods. Every day millions of her people wake to accept three



AN EGYPTIAN BEGGAR.

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contradictory religions ; and once a year her emperor mounts the triple Altar of Heaven and prostrates himself before the universe, alone in upper air."

The Word of God's love came to a world of darkness, beset with shadowy terrors and dominated by demons. The Gospel, and nothing else, has power to deliver men from the bondage of superstition and corruption and translate them into the kingdom of light and peace. Some time ago a Chinese enquirer described the Bible as "the heart-book"; last year it was described by another simple believer as "the book that can scatter sorrow." These happy phrases—unpremeditated words that rose to the lips—are passing revelations of the unseen, but ever-living ministry of the Divine Word in the souls of those who read its pages.

The Energy of the Word.

All the recorded sayings of Christ put together fill but a narrow compass. The Four Gospels could easily be printed in a single issue of *The Times*. Yet, brief as they are and simple in outward form, they have changed the axis of the world. The most startling achievement of recent science has been to discover what enormous energy can be contained in a single atom of radium. This thing is an allegory of the spiritual energy which resides in the Word of God. The Gospel can never be called old, except in the sense in which time is old, while morning is always new. It moves among the nations to-day, instinct with the power of an endless life.

The Book only begins its mission when it reaches the hands of those who read it, and the real story of a year's work can never be expressed by statistics. We quote, therefore, a few fresh examples which bear witness to the enduring spiritual potency of the Scriptures.

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A Brahman in Burma.

In a jungle village in the Pegu district of Burma one man held himself for many years haughtily aloof from the other villagers. If their shadow fell across his food, the food was thrown away. For he was a Brahman of the highest caste, whose proud traditions clung to him in his adopted country. Three years ago there came into his hands a copy of the Gospels in his own language. Before long he grew ill-content with Brahmanism, as the little book told him of the universal brotherhood and the common salvation. He sought and obtained a New Testament, then a Bible, and studied them eagerly. To-day that Brahman is a humble and devout believer in Jesus Christ.

An Armenian in Rumania.

It is not generally known that a good many Armenians are settled in Rumania. One of them encountered last year by Colporteur Klein spoke of how he loved his Bible, and told a curious story of how he first grew acquainted with God's Word. He was employed in an apothecary's shop, and noticed that leaves were being torn out of an old book to wrap up drugs. He took away some of these leaves to read, and discovered that the book was God's Word. Then he sought to gain possession of as many leaves as possible, but the apothecary would not allow this, and told him it was a sin to read the book. So the young man began to long for the day when he could buy himself a copy, and he is now the happy possessor and diligent reader of the Bible.

The first Bible he had ever seen.

One of our Japanese colporteurs at Uwajima, in the island of Shikoko, sold a Japanese Bible to a man starting

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out on a photographic tour. He wanted a book to read during his journey, and bought the Bible just as he would buy an ordinary novel. On the deck of a coasting steamer he was sitting reading the book when another passenger, the Rev. W. P. Turner, a missionary at Uwajima, fell into conversation with him and advised him to study the Bible carefully. A few days later Mr. Turner met this man again at a hotel in a small town where he had gone to hold a service. He attended the meeting at Mr. Turner's invitation. He took his Bible and was deeply impressed by what he heard. At the close he said : "This is the first time I have attended a Christian meeting, and this Bible is the first that I have ever seen or read." He promised when he returned, to attend Mr. Turner's services at Uwajima. He kept his word, and soon became so interested in Christianity that, after due study and preparation, he was baptized, and has since shown himself a sincere Christian.

At Bordeaux.

Our colporteur at Bordeaux visited a poor old French-woman who was nearing the end of her life, and spoke to her of the Saviour, the Friend of the poor. She replied : "Oh, I know Him. I learned to know Him from this little book which you see on the cupboard, which I bought a few years ago from a man like you. You couldn't believe the good it has done me. I have known better days, but I hardly suffer from my poverty ; for I leave everything to God, and I have peace in my heart."

A Well-worn Testament.

In Bohemia, a very poor and aged villager, who had bought a German Testament over thirty years ago, showed the venerable and tattered book to our colporteur.

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The covers were patched over with linen, the back was stitched together in curious fashion with thread and string, and the print was almost obliterated with thumbing—but the old man reads it still. He is the caretaker of the village cattle, and carries this Testament with him over the green hill-pastures.

“The Lord preaches on the Mount.”

“I had not much religion,” said a Frenchman, “but I bought a Gospel on the recommendation of a colporteur. I wouldn’t read it myself, but bought it for my little boy to play with. Out of curiosity I looked at the headings of the chapters. When I read ‘The Lord preaches on the Mount,’ I thought, ‘I must read this, just to see whether Jesus Christ was a better preacher than our *curés*.’ Well, believe me, I never came upon such wonderful reading; I have read that sermon more than twenty-five times.”

A Drunkard Transformed.

Colporteur Athanasoff writes:— “I met a Bulgarian to whom I had sold a New Testament two years ago. From being a confirmed drunkard, he has become a changed character. He told me, ‘It is due to reading the Gospel. I say to you, friend, that I have proved the divine power of the Gospel to save a man from sin and from himself.’”

“I heard it from St. Luke.”

Dr. R. Grierson, of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission in Korea, writes:—

“It is my custom, when conducting examinations for baptism, to ask each applicant from whom he first heard the Gospel. In Kyung Sung recently, the answer received was ‘I heard it first from St. Luke.’ So it would seem that the

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Evangelist being dead, yet speaketh, and every Testament or Gospel is a silent persistent preacher in the house of the purchaser. The Korean is determined always to get the full worth of every article he purchases, so he reads and re-reads his book. If this were a living preacher he might talk back and argue, but the printed page speaks without evoking a foolish reply ; its unanswerable truth irresistably enlightens the conscience."

St. John iii., 16.

From Burma we have this reported by a missionary helper :—

"A few weeks ago a Burman came to my house and asked for instruction with a view to Christian baptism. He is in a responsible position, drawing good pay in a Government department. He said that he had bought a copy of St. John's Gospel from a colporteur, and had come for instruction because of the words in St. John iii., 16: 'Whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.'"

In the Madras Presidency.

By special request, a Telugu Bible was presented recently to the consort of a ruling Rajah. This Bible—we are told by one who knows her well—has become her constant meditation and delight. "The room in her palace, which was filled with idols and idol-pictures, is now the prayer-room, adorned only by the Bible and other Christian books. . . . She has asked me to send a small gift to the Bible Society in Christ's name, and to express her longing that the Bible shall be distributed so that everyone may know the truth of it. I must not mention her name, but you can think of her as a Ranee."

"Doubtless . . . rejoicing."

Some years ago, in the Chinese Province of Yunnan, Mr. Owen Stevenson went to a market place near

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Kütsingfu with Scriptures. A boy ran home to his father in another village and told him of the foreigner and his books. This aroused the man's interest, and he obtained a copy of St. John's Gospel from Mr. Stevenson. After some time the poor old man turned up at the preaching hall in Kütsingfu, having simply "devoured" the Gospel. He knew about Christ as the Bread of Life, about His giving sight to the blind and raising the dead. He knew of Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. Better still, he was led to accept Christ as his Saviour. Thus was the first believer in Kütsingfu brought to God.

Up the Sleeve and in the Heart.

From Hankow, one of our Chinese colporteurs writes :

"A young man has repeated to me the Four Gospels and the Acts from memory. This is truly through the power of the Holy Spirit ; for his father has threatened to disinherit and beat him to death if he comes to us. He dare not take a Bible home, or read it in his home ; but he keeps a Gospel hidden up his sleeve, and whilst at work in the fields he commits it to memory. Fifteen months ago he did not know a single Chinese character ; but each time he manages to steal away here from his village I teach him the characters which he does not know in the new chapter, and he remembers from once telling."

A Chinese Colporteur's Father.

From Shantung, the Rev. W. H. Sears, of Pingtu, writes :—

"The father of Dai Chen-hai, one of our colporteurs, strongly opposed his son joining the Church. When he saw his son bow his head to ask grace before meals, or kneel down to pray, he would immediately drive him out of the house. Neither would he let his son say one word about Christianity.

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The son, however, would leave a New Testament in conspicuous places, and soon the father found himself looking into it out of curiosity. He grew interested, and now he has read the New Testament through, and is a zealous believer. He prays, talks about the doctrine freely and is an applicant for baptism. This man was so opposed to Christianity that it is not likely he could ever have been reached in any other way than by reading the New Testament."

In a Prison Cell.

A letter has been received from a man in a Japanese prison, confessing that for sixteen years the writer had been a thief. He had spent several years in jail at different times, and had planned to organize a large body of accomplished pickpockets for systematic robbery of travellers. At the same time, his mind had been occupied by thoughts about what would become of him after death. He obtained some books of Buddhist teaching, but was not satisfied with their mystical and contradictory statements. The prison warder advised him to try reading what Christianity taught on the subject. He secured a copy of our five-farthing New Testament, and in a very short time found an answer to his questionings. He learned that Christ had died that he might have life. In that prison cell he called upon God, and in contrition and penitence confessed his sins and received assurance of their forgiveness. He wrote that he was now sending copies of the New Testament to the men whom he had tried to influence for evil.

A Korean Tramp and the New Testament.

In the early days of the mission at Taiku, in Southern Korea, meetings were held in a house with a tiled roof, set amidst a thickly populated section of that city of straw-thatched buildings. One Sunday morning, as the

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Korean believers and enquirers were assembling for worship and instruction, a genuine tramp arrived and seated himself in the veranda, attracted, no doubt, by the tiled roof—thinking that this was a rich man's residence, and that as the sun was nearing high noon there was the chance of obtaining a portion of rice and a bit of good pickled cabbage. The gathering which he found there and the feast of spiritual things were out of the ordinary in this man's experience, and he listened attentively. Finally he said, "I cannot understand all you say, but it seems good. I want to get one of your books." So he purchased a copy of the Chinese New Testament—the only version available in those days—and went his way. He was evidently a man of some education as he could read Chinese intelligently.

About a year or so later, the missionary in Taiku was requested to visit Myriyang, where there were reported to be some enquirers. Arriving at the place, who should come to welcome him but the same tramp who had sat in the church-veranda at Taiku on that Sunday morning many months before. The missionary found enquirers not a few, and the first group to be baptized some months later numbered fifteen. During his visit, the missionary found himself one evening in the midst of a circle of interested listeners. The subject of their conversation was "the wonderful Book." Finally our tramp friend held up his copy of the Chinese Testament—with its covers, and its pages next to the covers, worn to tatters by constant use—and said, as he pressed it to his breast, "I love this Book as a mother loves her child. When she lies down at night, she takes it in her arms and lies down with it. When she rises up in the morning, she straps it on her back and goes out with it. That is the way I love this Book.

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Though I read it a hundred times, it always comes with a fresh flavour to my mouth.” The group of enquirers there was the one result of his testimony. The tramp is still roving about with his Book, everywhere reading and telling the contents of the wonderful volume.

A Convict transformed.

In the prison of the town of Talca, in Southern Chile, a notorious bandit was confined, who had long eluded the authorities. A criminal from boyhood, his hands were stained with the blood of more than one victim. At last, however, he had been captured and sentenced to penal servitude for life. To a wild mountaineer this was worse than death, and in his desperation the convict would strike his guards, hoping to force them to shoot him. Happily, one of these guards was a Christian, who belonged to the Presbyterian Church in Talca. Moved with compassion, he spoke to his prisoner of Christ, the sinners' Friend, and gave him from the Gospels a brief outline of Christ's life. The convict listened, at first with scorn, afterwards with interest, and finally asked if the book containing this wonderful story could be bought. Hearing that it might be purchased for a very small price, he drew his knife from his belt and said : “*Señor*, I have no money, but pawn this knife and buy a Bible with the proceeds.” The warder put the knife in his pocket and went his way, but the next day he brought his own Bible and presented it to the convict. The latter read and re-read the book, and gradually a change was observed in his conduct. It was the outward token of inward renewal. He became a new creature. The power of the Old, Old Story transformed him, and he grew meek and obedient to his jailors, doing his daily round of duties with

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cheerfulness and resignation. After some time, he was removed to the prison at Santiago, where he proved the means of bringing some of his fellow-prisoners to a knowledge of Christ. A priest, who sometimes visited this penitentiary, complained to the Governor that several convicts were reading the Bible and talking about salvation. But the Governor was a keen observer and a just ruler. Referring to the ex-bandit, he replied : "If reading the Bible has changed that man's life, it must surely be a good book, and I see no reason to forbid the prisoners to peruse its pages."

It touches their hearts.

A pioneer missionary in Nyasaland, Mr. Edwin Price, has spent fifteen years among African savages, who are slowly learning to read the New Testament which the Bible Society has published for them in Yao and in Nyanja. Mr. Price was recently asked what part of the Scriptures appealed to such savage readers most forcibly. His answer was : " I should say the Crucifixion ; they can understand that. We explain the Cross to them by pointing to the cross-beam in a native hut—a post is fastened upright in the ground, with a beam across it at the top which holds up the roof. We tell them that Christ was nailed to such a cross, and that He died because He loved us, and that His sacrifice was offered for us all : and it touches their hearts."

The Cross Inside.

God's Word of reconciliation brings men's hearts together at a common focus. The Bible Society's mission is central, in that it fixes attention upon the whole content and purport of Holy Scripture. In these days, when so many Christians have their souls

AMONG THE NATIONS

distracted by side issues and their activities diverted into the details of doing good, it is no small gain to be recalled continually from things accidental to what is the very essence of Christian faith. In Canada, last year, an Italian immigrant objected that there was no cross stamped on the cover of the Italian Bible which was offered him. "No," replied the colporteur, "but if you read the book, you will find the Cross inside."

* * *

The Bible Society does not argue or apologize. It goes on quietly acting. It distributes everywhere the Book about which so many men dispute, and in this way it subjects the Bible to a crucial experiment on a vast scale. As the result of this experiment we can say confidently that "the Word of prophecy is made more sure." Human experience in every land bears witness that God's message verily speaks in Holy Scripture—the message of Redeeming Love from His Heart to our hearts. By its inherent spiritual vitality and by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit through its pages, the Bible produces and maintains the Divine life in the soul of man.

THE WORD

£ s. d.

“The question is not how much of our money we will give to God, but how much of God’s money we will keep for ourselves.”

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive . . . riches.”
REV. 5: 12.

Such world-wide Christian service as we have described, even when it is conducted on lines of severe economy, entails heavy expenditure. The Society spent last year £103,000 on translating, revising, printing and binding the Scriptures; £51,000 on its depôts and Agents abroad; and £44,000 on its colporteurs and Biblewomen.

The cost of the Books.

The expenses incurred for translations and revisions are often unavoidably large. Taking some new revisions which came into use last year, we find that the Society spent £450 on the last revision of the Icelandic Bible, £658 in the last revision of the Hungarian Bible, and no less than £3,520 on the last revision of the Hindi Old Testament. These sums are quite apart from any cost of printing and binding.

The scale on which the Society conducts its operations may be realized by two or three examples. In South America Spanish and Portuguese are the dominant

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languages, and for that great neglected continent the following new editions have been printed during the last few months or are now in the press. In Spanish: 23,000 Bibles, 20,000 Testaments, and 100,000 separate Portions of the Gospels or Acts. In Portuguese: 10,000 Bibles, 20,000 Testaments, and 100,000 separate Portions of the Gospels or Acts. On these new editions for South America, including the making of plates, the Society is expending the large sum of £4,354, and this does not include the cost of binding the books or sending them abroad.

Within the last few months our Committee have also given orders for the following Malagasy editions:— 10,000 Bibles with central references, and 20,000 Bibles with the text alone. These latter are sold at 1s. each, and cost the Society about 2s. each. The outlay in making plates for, and printing, these two editions amounts to nearly £2,000, and this is quite apart from the expense of binding and the charges for freight.

The prices charged for the Books.

The preceding pages have already illustrated one controlling principle of the Bible Society's mission. Far from doing business at a profit, it habitually sells its popular editions at prices which involve serious loss. Those prices are fixed in any country not by considering how much the books have cost to produce and distribute, but by considering what the poorest class of labourers in that country can afford to pay. Thus, in England, the English New Testament can be bought for 1d., and the English Bible for 6d.; the Revised Version may be had for 10d., while an excellent school Bible in admirably clear type is sold for 1s. The Society's 6d. Dutch Bible is the cheapest book in South Africa. All over India Bibles

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in each of the great vernaculars are sold for 1s., while New Testaments are charged 4d., and single gospels sell for one *pice* (i.e., $\frac{1}{4}$ d.) each. In China, where a coolie often earns only 6d. or 7d. a day, the New Testament in an excellent *format* is sold for 2d., while cheaper copies may be had for a fraction over 1d. A well-bound Chinese Bible is sold for 6d. In Japan, a New Testament can be bought for 5 *sen* (i.e., $1\frac{1}{4}$ d.), which costs 7 *sen* to print and bind.

A colporteur in Ceylon writes :—"I met two Brahmans. One of them asked me to give him a book. I told him I was quite willing to sell him one if he was prepared to buy it. He asked me the price and I told him 2 *cents* (about $\frac{1}{4}$ d.), showing him a copy of St. Matthew's Gospel. He said 'Why do you sell this book at such a cheap price? The cost of the paper alone must be more than 5 or 6 *cents*.' I said : 'The price is low so as to put the book within the reach of even a poor man.' Then they each bought a Gospel and went away."

The poverty of the Poor.

Low as these prices appear, they are beyond the reach of many impoverished folk, eager to read the Gospel. It is difficult, indeed, for us to realize that myriads of human beings live just above the limit of starvation. In many lands we hear of people in such poverty that they are literally unable to find one small coin to purchase that Book which is the consolation and compensation of the disinherited. An old Frenchwoman at Beauvais, who had not a *sou*, bought St. John's Gospel for a piece of bread and a rasher of bacon. At a little town in Styria, a shoemaker had no money, so he soled the colporteur's shoes as payment for a Bible. In Lombardy, a street-hawker eagerly exchanged two note-books for an Italian New Testament. Among the



A SINHALESE WOMAN, WITH A TOMTOM.

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Servian mountains the people in some districts were so poor that our colporteurs had to accept bread in payment for their books, instead of money.

In Oran, one Arab gave a few oranges for a Gospel, others some eggs, and others offered bread. From Siberian villages on the banks of the river Yenesei, our colporteur writes: "Many a time I have taken bread in place of coins in exchange for a copy of the Scriptures." In the Panjab, Miss Green of the C.E.Z.M.S. at Karachi, tells of a young man so eager to get a Sindhi Testament that he made a bead picture-frame to give in exchange for the volume. In Upper Burma, an old Shan woman wanted a Gospel for her grand-children, and could only give some rice in return. Near Cerro in the Andes, a Peruvian Indian who had no money gave our colporteur three candles for a Testament.

Mr. Larson sends a graphic account of how the Scriptures are bartered in Mongolia :—

"The Mongols have no money : they use lumps of uncoined silver. Gospels are generally bartered for milk—camel's milk, mare's milk, cow's milk, goat's milk, and sometimes sheep's milk ; also for Mongolian cheese, fresh, or in a high state of decay ; and for *argol* (*i.e.* dry dung, used for fuel). The milk I drink ; the cheese I generally give to the Mongols who travel with me ; while the *argol* is indispensable for making fires."

At one poverty-stricken village in Galicia some men went into partnership to purchase a Ruthenian Bible as common property, and arranged to meet every week in each other's houses by rotation that they might study this Bible together.

In Malabar the country-folk are so indigent that they often hesitate to spend three *pies* (= $\frac{1}{4}d.$) on a complete Gospel, but buy instead a copy of the Sermon on the

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Mount or some other selection from the Gospel, issued by the Basel Mission at one *pie* apiece.

Free Gifts.

While, as a general rule, the Society's editions are sold at some small fixed charge, our colporteurs have authority to give a copy of the Scriptures *gratis* to any person who is able and wishful to read, and yet too destitute to pay even part of the price. Thousands of volumes are granted annually by our Committee, free of all charge, in cases of special need, at home as well as abroad. Last year, for instance, 400 pocket Bibles were carefully distributed by visitors of the Ragged School Union among crippled children in London; while an English Bible was given to each boy or girl emigrant sent out to Canada from Dr. Barnardo's Homes and similar philanthropic institutions. Hebrew Bibles were presented to impoverished Jews in Morocco, whose books had been destroyed during the bombardment of Casablanca. The Scriptures were provided for prisoners in Russia, in Rumania, and in Brazil. The Committee granted Gospels in French, English, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Flemish, Arabic, and Malagasy, for distribution among convicts of various nationalities in French Guiana. M. Etienne Matter, of the *Société de Patronage des Prisonniers Libérés*, writes :—" Nous vous sommes bien profondément reconnaissants de ce don généreux, et nous vous en remercions de tout cœur au nom des malheureux condamnés qui pourront, grâce à vous, entendre le divin message."

* * *

On the whole, out of every £1 which the Bible Society expends in preparing, producing, and distributing the Scriptures, less than 8s. comes back to it from the

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proceeds of sales. For the remainder, the Society relies entirely upon the gifts of Bible-readers and Bible-lovers in many lands. This Report has indeed marred a noble tale in the telling, if it needs rhetoric to enforce its lesson. The facts themselves plead, trumpet-tongued, and bring home their appeal to every Christian heart.

The Testimony of a Great Administrator.

We cannot conclude more fitly than by quoting the letter which Sir Robert Hart, G.C.M.G., wrote on April 15th, 1909, regretting his enforced absence from the Society's annual meeting.

“Of making of books there is no end, but there is only one Bible, and your Society is doing a work that can never be fully valued in preparing it in all languages for the use of all men, and in supplying missionaries with what they require for their growing work throughout the earth. You have made wonderful advances these last hundred years, and you will follow them up till every man possesses his own copy of the Scriptures in his own tongue, and what you do is at the bottom of every missionary effort, and rears walls around to protect and support the result of such labours. Our Lord's last promise was to be with His disciples to the end of the world, both in time and space, and His presence will accompany His Word to all the quarters you send it to. I admire the zeal with which you beat up recruits and push on the doings of this grand Society; and as I cannot be with you on May 5th, may I say how much I value what you do—how much I realise its importance—and how much I feel that its effort will know no failure and will be more and more appreciated as time rolls on.”

APPENDIX.

NOTICE RESPECTING REMITTANCES.

Subscriptions and donations are received at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. ; also at the Society's Bankers, WILLIAMS DEACON'S Bank, Limited, 20, Birchin Lane, E.C. ;—advice being sent to the Secretaries at the Bible House. Cheques, Bankers' Drafts, and Post Office Orders (*on the General Post Office*), should be made payable to *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, and addressed to the Secretaries.

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I bequeath the sum of _____ *Pounds sterling*
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the purposes of the said Society to the Treasurer for the time
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* Resigning in the Autumn, 1909.

† Resigning, October 1st, 1909.

THE WORD

SUMMARY.

The British and Foreign Bible Society exists for one single object—to supply every man with the Holy Scriptures in his own mother-tongue. It concerns itself solely with circulating that Book which is the Charter of Christ's Church throughout all the world. And in this aim it unites Christians of almost every communion.

The Year 1908-1909.

Last year the Society issued over 5,934,000 copies of the Scriptures—complete or in parts. This total is 246,000 copies in advance of the output in the previous year, but it was surpassed by the figures announced in 1903 and in 1906. Compared with 1907-8, Bibles show an increase of 20,000, while Testaments are about 20,000 fewer. In Portions, however, last year's issue was 246,000 above the year previous, and constitutes a record in the experience of our Society. The steadily increasing demand for these Gospels and Psalters, which circulate mainly in the mission field, shows how the Society is fulfilling its vital function as the partner and pioneer of Foreign Missions.

The issues from the Bible House in London for the past year were 1,884,000 copies—an increase of 46,000 on the previous year. The growth was entirely in our English and Welsh editions—a slight recovery after several years of decline.

The London Bible House issued 733,000 copies in foreign languages, which for convenience had been printed in England. The bulk of our circulation, however, consists of editions which, as far as possible, are produced and published in the countries where they will be sold and read.

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The Society prints the Scriptures at about fifty different places, and in sixty different alphabets and characters.

The total issues by the Society since its foundation have been 215,500,000 copies of the Scriptures, complete or in parts. Of these, more than eighty-two millions have been in English.

The Work at Home.

Of last year's issues, 1,151,126 volumes were in English or Welsh, and circulated mainly in the British Empire. Of the Society's English Penny Testament, 109,801 were issued, making a total of 8,944,445 during the last twenty-four years.

The English Scriptures issued last year included 118,568 copies of the Society's 6d. Bible; 100,359 copies of the 10d. Bible; and 50,692 copies of the new 1s. School Bible. The issues also included about 30,000 Bibles and Testaments in the English Revised Version. Nearly 50,000 copies were in Welsh, and about 2,900 volumes were circulated in embossed type for the blind.

In England and Wales the Society spent about £9,000 last year, mainly in direct grants of Scriptures—free or at greatly reduced rates—to the Sunday Schools and Home Missions of nearly every Christian Communion, and to all the varied agencies of religious and philanthropic activity.

Nearly all the English and Welsh Institutions for befriending the blind obtain the Scriptures which they require from the Bible House, at less than half the cost of their production.

Students at Theological and Missionary Colleges in England and Wales, who need such assistance, receive as gifts, about 1,000 Testaments in Hebrew or Greek each year. The Society also presents outgoing missionaries with Bibles or Testaments in the vernaculars of the fields in which they labour.

A subsidy of nearly £500 a year is given to the London Biblewomen and Nurses' Mission, which employs over 150 Biblewomen and Nurses, who read and sell the Scriptures in the poorest districts of the Metropolis.

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Translation and Revision.

The Society's list of versions now includes the names of FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN distinct forms of speech. This means the complete Bible in 105 different languages ; the New Testament in 102 more languages ; and at least one Book of Scripture in 211 other languages.

To print these languages, sixty different sets of characters are required. Twenty-eight new names have been added to the list during the last four years.

The Society's expenditure last year for translating, revising, printing and binding the Scriptures was £102,876.

In embossed type for the blind the Society has helped to provide Scriptures in over thirty different languages.

The Partner of Missions.

The Bible Society co-operates with the missionaries of almost every Christian communion in preparing the versions which they need. It prints the editions, bears the loss involved in their sale at reduced prices, and pays the carriage of the books to the mission stations. Where colportage is undertaken to facilitate distribution, the Society also makes grants towards the support of colporteurs working under the missionaries' supervision.

From the Bible Society, the Church of England, with comparatively insignificant exceptions, obtains almost all the Scriptures required for its foreign missions.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts has procured Scriptures from the Bible Society in seventy languages. The Church Missionary Society uses one hundred and seven different translations which come from the Bible House. Equally important help is rendered to the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, the Melanesian Mission, and the South American Missionary Society.

Nonconformist Foreign Missions obtain the bulk of all the Scriptures they use, directly or indirectly, from the Bible Society.

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It furnishes the London Missionary Society with the Scriptures in fifty-eight different languages, and the Methodist Missionary Societies of Great Britain and her Colonies with ninety-one versions. Presbyterian Missions throughout the world use one hundred and thirteen of its versions. It published the Kongo version for the Baptist Missionary Society, and also supplies many of their stations in China and Jamaica. The China Inland Mission and other undenominational societies practically obtain all the Scriptures they use.

The enterprises and triumphs of Christian Missions are creating as many new and imperious claims upon this Society—which has never refused to publish a duly authenticated version of the Scriptures in a new tongue. Each new tribe evangelized, each fresh language reduced to writing and grammar, each new convert baptized, means a new claim for help from the resources of the Bible House—help which is most gladly given, on such terms that it creates no charge upon the funds of the Mission which is aided thereby.

In Foreign Lands.

The Society maintains depôts in about a hundred of the chief cities of the world.

It employs about 900 native Christian colporteurs who were continuously at work throughout the year 1908, supervised by the Society's foreign Agents, or its missionary friends. These colporteurs sold last year over 2,600,000 copies.

It supports 600 native Christian Biblewomen, mainly in the East, in connection with forty different missionary organisations.

The Society's grants for Colporteurs and Biblewomen during 1908 amounted to nearly £44,000.

Auxiliaries.

At the close of 1908 the Society had 5,259 Auxiliaries, Branches, and Associations in England and Wales. During 1908 as many as 4,651 meetings were held, and 3,195 sermons preached, on behalf of the Society.

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Outside the United Kingdom the Society has about 2,521 Auxiliaries and Branches, mainly in the British Colonies. Many of these carry on Bible distribution vigorously in their own localities, besides sending generous annual contributions to the Bible House in London.

The Centenary Fund.

From this fund £117,111 has already been spent, for the most part on definite special objects involving capital expenditure, but also relieving the Society's annual charges. Thus large sums have been laid out in securing sites, depôts, or other premises for the Society at important centres, mainly in the East.

Considerable sums have also been voted for new versions and editions of the Scriptures, and recently for extended colportage in South America, in Burma, in China, in Korea, and in Japan.

Expenditure.

The general expenditure for the past year has been £236,562. This is an increase of £10,069 over the total of the previous year; but it still falls £19,000 below the expenditure in 1903-4, which was the highest in the Society's history.

With regard to the items of this increase, we note that, as was the case in 1907, the cost of foreign depôts has again risen:—this year by £3,161. This, however, is by no means an unsatisfactory sign of the general development of the Society's work in its Foreign Agencies, especially in the Far East.

The amount spent on colportage from the General Fund has increased by £2,342, chiefly in India, China, Korea, and Japan. Other items of expenditure show an increase amounting altogether to £1,878.

The Committee have expended altogether £102,876 in producing versions and editions of the Scriptures; this is £2,689 more than in the previous year.

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Receipts.

On the other hand, the general receipts for the year were £237,313—showing a decline of £2,237 as compared with the figures for 1907-8.

Examining the several items of this total, we find that donations paid in to the Bible House increased by £711. Collections and subscriptions paid in to the Bible House also increased by £1,036.

Legacies.

The Legacies received during the past year amounted to £38,924—a large decrease on the previous year. As the Society's annual receipts from legacies naturally vary to an extent which cannot be foreseen, the Committee have formed a "Legacy Equalization Fund," by means of which they use as income from this source in any year the annual average of the legacies received during the previous seven years. Acting on this rule, the amount from legacies to be now carried into income is £41,655.

It is satisfactory to report that the Society's total receipts from sales, which had fallen to £88,522 in 1906, were last year, £92,265.

Free Contributions.

The Free Contributions received from auxiliaries at home and abroad have been £68,660—a decrease of £4,450. Of the decrease, £1,134 appears in the receipts from Auxiliaries in England and Wales, while the Colonial Auxiliaries have paid in £3,316 less than in the previous year. More than £2,000 of this Colonial decline is due to the fact that the Canada Auxiliary has been involved in unusually heavy expense by the rapid growth of organized Bible work within the Dominion. Australia has sent £2,794, and New Zealand £1,620. The Hibernian Bible Society's total contribution has risen to £1,500.

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A small Balance.

Payments and receipts, under sundry Special Funds, raised the Society's Total Expenditure last year to £237,041, and the Total Receipts to £238,040, leaving a net excess on the year's working of £999.

In the autumn of 1908 the Committee made a careful survey of the Society's operations, to determine how far colportage might wisely be extended in each Agency. They determined to authorize a number of new colporteurs in different countries, which will involve an increased expenditure of over £3,000 a year. Even during the past twelve months the number of our colporteurs has increased in certain countries, and their work as a whole has proved signally successful.

In face of this forward movement and the inevitable expansion of the work in every continent, there is need for a generous increase in the Society's income.



Our Friends above.

Since the Society's last annual meeting nine more of its Vice-Presidents have been called to their rest and their reward: The Archbishop of Sydney; the Dean of Peterborough; Dr. J. H. Rigg, the Nestor among Wesleyan ecclesiastics; Canon Fleming, the silver-tongued divine; Sir Lovelace T. Stamer, formerly Bishop of Shrewsbury; Sir George Livesey, a great captain of industry; Mr. Daniel Wellby, experienced in business and beautiful in character; and Dr. Theodore Duka, the veteran Hungarian patriot, who fought gallantly for the liberty of his fatherland sixty years ago. Last, but assuredly not least, among these, we commemorate our dear friend, Mr. Caleb R. Kemp, beloved and revered by all his colleagues, and for sixteen years Chairman of the Committee; we thank God for every remembrance of him, and for his inestimable services to the Bible Society.

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The Chairman of the Committee.

To this post, filled for so long by Mr. Caleb R. Kemp, the Committee have unanimously elected Mr. Williamson Lamplough.

The Staff.

Last summer the Rev. John Sharp finally laid down his charge as Editorial Superintendent and Consulting Secretary, and retired from the Bible House, after twenty-eight years of such service as few men have been privileged to render to the Bible Society. With deep satisfaction we record the recent appointment of the Rev. R. Kilgour, M.A., D.D., to the vacant post of Editorial Superintendent. Dr. Kilgour has done twenty years' service in the Church of Scotland's Mission at Darjeeling, and for the last four years has also been engaged on behalf of our Society as translator of the Naipali New Testament.

Mr. Arthur G. Jayne, B.A., has been appointed Assistant in the Literary Department at the Bible House.

Mr. A. E. Butler has been appointed a member of the Society's staff in India. Mr. Butler left for Lahore early in February, 1909, to take the place of Mr. W. H. L. Church, Secretary of the Panjab Auxiliary, during the latter's furlough.

The Rev. J. O. Haughton, B.A., Assistant Curate of St. Peter's, Birkdale, has been appointed District Secretary of the South-West Lancashire District.

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CONDENSED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS EXTRACTED FROM THE FOR THE YEAR ENDING

RECEIPTS.

FROM SALES OF SCRIPTURES.

Sales through Trade Depôts, Auxiliary and other Societies	£31,242 16 9
Sales in the Society's Foreign Agencies	61,021 16 6
	<hr/>
	92,264 13 3

FREE INCOME.

Contributions from Auxiliaries	68,660 7 10
Annual Subscriptions, Donations, Legacies, &c. (paid in London)	77,115 7 1

£238,040 8 2

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AND PAYMENTS OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY,
ANNUAL REPORT,
MARCH 31ST, 1909.

PAYMENTS.

For translating and revising the Scriptures, and for paper, printing and binding ...	£103,113 15 4
For rent, taxes, establishment, &c., of over 100 Foreign Depôts and Warehouses in the chief cities in the world, grants to other Depôts, salaries of foreign Agents, Depositaries, &c.	51,223 4 10
Towards the maintenance of Colporteurs and Biblewomen	43,924 13 2
For the Bible House staff and expenses of the House in London, District Secretaries, travelling expenses, and grants to assist kindred societies in Bible distribution ...	27,265 14 3
For London Warehouse expenses and staff, reports, literature, freight and carriage of Scriptures, &c.	11,513 12 10
	<hr/>
	£237,041 0 5
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9/69.

